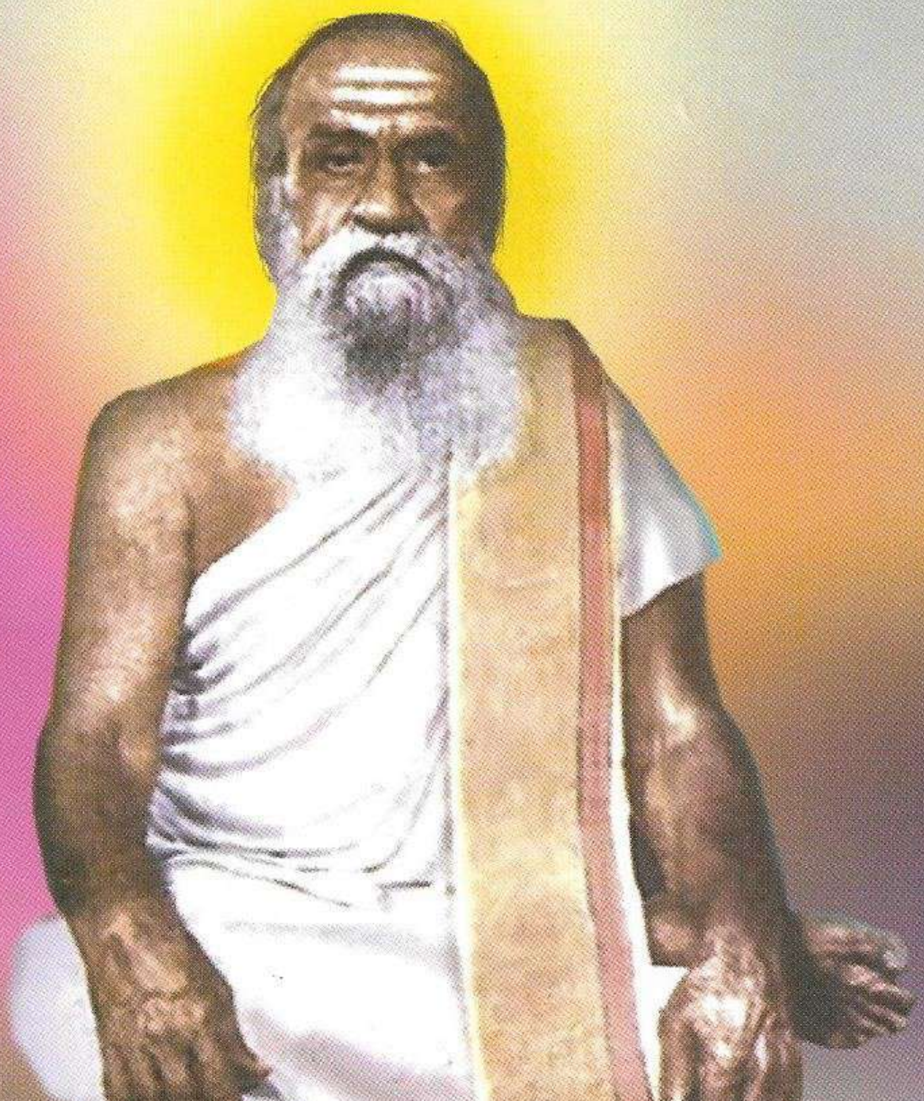
The Revelation of Chandodarshana

THE LIFE OF BRAHMARSHI DAIVARATA



Kannada
Vedashrava Sharma
English Rendering
Lakshmikant Hegde

SAKSHI

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The Life of Brahmarṣi Daivarāta

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Contents

1. The life of Shrī Daivarāta

Gokarna is a beautiful place on the west-coast of Karnataka, in South India. It is a very sacred pilgrimage centre, whose antiquity stretches back into Purānic times. It is couched in the Rishyashrung hills of the Sahyādri range and flanked by beautiful hills on the eastern side and the roaring western sea on the other side. River Aghanāshini flows on the eastern side and River Gangāvali on the northern side. The area in and around Gokarna has many sacred spots and Tīrthas, besides the ancient temple of Mahābaleshwara, which is said to have been the spot of Ātmalinga (Mahābaleshwara Linga of Bhagavān Shiva) connected to Rāvana.

At this place lived a cultured Vedic family known as Bhadti. They belonged to 'Vishwāmitra-Devarāta-Audala' Gotra lineage. Shrī Vighneshwara Bhat of this family was a well versed Vedic and Sanskrit scholar, who lived with his wife Nāgaveni. A male child was born to them on the 5th day of the bright half of the month Pushya, of Khara Samvatsara (Date 04-01-1892). The child was named 'Ganesha'.

The child was bestowed with the splendour of Rishis of the Vedic era. He was destined to be Seer of the Mantras, who was after thousand years, one to deserve the epithet of ‘BrahmaRishi’ (Mantra-Rishi). He grew under the affectionate care and nurturing of his parents. The boy Ganesha displayed special and peculiar traits and characteristics, unlike ordinary children. At times he used to sit in utter silence, in the evening time, on the steps of the ‘Koti-Tirtha' which was just in front of his house. If anybody had made him laugh, he would go on laughing without stop. At times, if he went to bed, crying, even after getting up in the morning he used to continue crying. Normally he didn’t mingle much with the children of his age. But at times he used to move with them merrily or, he would dive deep into silence within himself.

He was addressed with many nicknames, due to his peculiarities, such as dullard, pet child of the Grandma etc. He was very sensitive, but had a lucid and innocent disposition. One could guess that in his childhood itself he used recall or go into the glimpses of the state of mind described in the Yoga. Whatever it be, perhaps by the effect of his samskara of the past, and the love and care of the parents, his personality was developing in an independent way.

2. **Shrī Jayaram Bhat**

Revival of Vedic learning and spirituality in Gokarna.

One, by name Shri Jayaram Bhat Sapre, who was the royal priest, visited Gokarna, accompanying the queen of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. He was erudite scholar in the Vedas and Dasha-granthas. He was a Karhade Brahmin, born at Sagar, near Lashkar, belonging to the province of Gwalior.

The arrangement for the stay of the queen was made at the place of Subba-Adiga, who was considered to be fairly rich. Jayaram Bhat had no acquaintances. While he was sitting on the outside house of one Shri Prasad Bhat, the mother of Prasad Bhat happened to see him, and sensed that he was a learned, pious person, and requested Shri Jayaram Bhat, to make a convenient stay with them. But as he didn't know Kannada then, someone helped him with the translation, and he happily agreed.

Shri Jayaram Bhat was very much happy to see the host of learned people in Gokarna and also was attracted by the peaceful atmosphere, very polite, pious and frank dealings of the people. The idea of going back to his native place didn't arise, and he informed to the queen that he would permanently stay in Gokarna. A person of vast and deep erudition, simplicity, pious and moderate conduct as he was, many people of the place sought tutelage under him. Among them were Krishna Bhat Mayyar, Markandeya Venkata Ramana Bhat, Ananta Upadhyaya, Bhadti Vighneshwar Bhat etc. Shri Jayaram Bhat taught them RiRigveda and Dasha-granthas. From the afternoon till the evening he gave spiritual discourses to the general public of Gokarna. With his hearty efforts, Vedic learning reached new heights in Gokarna.

3. **Construction of Mallikarjuna temple at Ashokavana**

Every month there used to be three Anadhyayana (no study). During those days Shri Jayaram Bhat used to visit nearby places of special importance and get acquainted with the surroundings. One day he came to Ashokavana situated between Tadadi and Gokarna. A narrow path through Bhimakunda, at the South East of Koti-Tirtha led to that place. The atmosphere at Ashokavana was cool, pleasant and a deep silence swayed all over there. All around green forests,

surrounding a small pond in the low area, that is Ashoka Tirtha. A short stroll further in the forest, takes one to small and clean brook, on the banks of which were flowery Ashoka trees, whose foliage sheltered chirping and singing birds – all set to take away all the fatigue of a long walk through the narrow path. The enchanting atmosphere exuded a rare fragrance, say, of a divine realm. Watching all these, when he further came to a flat ground, he saw a Shiva Linga – the Mallikarjuna Linga. When he was discerning all around, he found, down below, a small pond, almost covered by Ketaki thickets, which barred nearer approach. When they cleared the thickets, he found a stone Linga in the pond. Jayam Bhat was stunned with the wonder, to grasp the mysterious destiny that led him all the way from far Gwalior to Gokarna. When he came back and informed the elders in Gokarna about what he had found, he was told that the one on the flat ground was Mallikarjuna Linga and that which was found in the pond was Sita Linga. Then, Jayaram Bhat took initiative, discussed with all prominent people, and in a short time managed to construct a temple for Mallikarjuna. Question arose as to where the Sita Linga should be installed. After pondering over, it was decided that Sita Linga should be installed in the open, without a roof covering, outside, on the right side of Mallikarjuna. A stone block was carved in the shape of Kunda and in it was installed the Sita Linga.

It is customary that Linga are installed on a stone pedestal. But here, Sita Linga has no such pedestal. Just as a child resting on the lap of her mother, Sita Linga has the earth, mother of Sita as the set of installation, displaying simplicity, devoid of all aggrandisements.

The name of this place hasn't come from the existence of Ashoka trees, nor has it anything to do with the name of any person, nor with the Ashokavana mentioned in the Ramayana and Puranas. It indicates that the place is providing peace and sacred atmosphere, quite conducive to observe any austerity or Tapasya – a Yoga Bhumi.

It was the full moon day of the month Vaishakha that the temple of Mallikarjuna was completed and the installation of Linga was carried out. A custom came into vogue to celebrate that day as Vasantotsava, with special woRiship and food distribution. As Shri Jayaram Bhat was the initiator of this, and many other spiritual and cultural programmes, the people of Gokarna took it as

their pleasure and duty to invite him for meals, everyday in a serial order, and offer sweets whole leaving. But he used to distribute them all to the children, on his way.

4. The seed of spirituality sown

Young Ganesha was observer of all these noble works carried out by Shri Jayaram Bhat. The words of praise and reverence of the people around Shri Jayaram Bhat, his noble and pious character and simple life were making a deep impression on the young mind of Ganesha, and the seed of spirituality was implanted deep in his heart.

As the days passed, Shri Jayaram Bhat, along with his sublime acts and pious living, developed a sort of inner awareness; he turned more and more introvert, and his heart yearned to attain the sublime experience of self realisation. He stayed in a small room, in the south portion of Markandeya temple which was in the middle of township. He preferred solitude. He abandoned all the external attractions and remained in silence for some time and completed 24 lakh repetition of Gayatri and thereafter he took Sanyasa – the life of renunciation. He was conferred on with the epithet 'Satchidananda' by his Guru. People, usually started to call him 'Gurumurti'.

After Shri Jayaram Bhat took Sanyasa, people used to visit him in the afternoon after 4 pm. Ganesha's mother Nāgaveni always took Ganesha with her, and he developed a deep reverence towards Gurumurthi. Ganesha's conduct with Gurumurthi, as well as others was always meek and humble, and full of devotion, which pleased everyone, more so his mother. It could be due to his past Samskara or the pious influence of his mother, whatever be it, this atmosphere, and contact with Gurumurthi initiated sprouting of spiritual bent of mind in Ganesha.

5. Thread ceremony of young Ganesha

Ganesha was nearing the age of eight years, appropriate time of performing initiation ceremony. Peculiarly intelligent, yet inwardly contemplative by disposition as he was, his personality was an enigma to others. But he was by

his nature, helpful to all, irrespective of old or young. He was ready to help anybody whenever any opportunity presented itself. All the elderly people around, knew this, and many of them suggested that his Upanayana is to be performed. So, Vighneshwar Bhat, his father decided to do so. His elder brother, Shiva Bhat, also happily agreed. Vighneshwar Bhat was always very obedient to his elder brother, and was dependent on him for everything.

The Upanayana ceremony of Ganesha and Narayana, the son of Shiva Bhat's another younger brother, was performed simultaneously. In those days Upanayana ceremony used to be of three days and on the fourth day the initiated celibate used to be decorated with ornaments and gorgeous dress, with a turban and be taken to the temple in a procession. But Ganesha outright refused to wear any ornaments and rich dress, but insisted on going to the temple in the same attire on which he was for three days of the ceremony. That dress was a simple minimum dress of a celibate with Palasha stick in hand. No amount of persuasion would work. Ultimately his mother pleaded on his part to allow him to be as he wanted while going to the temple.

This incident, though seemingly trivial, gives ample proof that Ganesha always disdained gorgeous paraphernalia and pomp, instead, loved simplicity. He never accepted anything just because it was a custom. We find that this love of simplicity continued throughout his life, even when he visited palaces or Rajabhavanas, or he lived in a hermitage – all the same to him. Rather he was an anachronistic, and internally, it seems, he belonged to Arsheya (Vedic) age and way of looking at life, wherein mundane pomp was given least importance and the inclination was towards an ennobled and internally divinised living.

6. Demise of mother Nāgaveni

Shri Ganesha Shastri Hosmane was a well known scholar in Gokarna. His daughter Nagaveni was married to Shri Vighneshwar Bhat. Nagaveni was a gracious, cultured woman. She managed the big combined family of Shri Vighneshwar Bhat, with harmony with the members, handling all the household duties, always with a smile on her face. She never grumbled with anything or anybody. She was a very devout person.

A few days after the thread ceremony (Upanayana) of Ganesha, she contracted typhoid which didn't subside for any medicine then known. There were no well equipped hospitals. There were some families, who maintained the tradition of giving herbal, local medicines which were the only remedies available. But Nagaveni showed no improvement. She had a small baby of eight months, Lalitha, who was not allowed to go to her mother for the fear of infection and she had a son of six years by name Seetharam. Nagaveni was more worried about Lalitha. At this situation, she was taken to her father's place. Day by day she became weaker and weaker. Ganesha was with her attending to all her needs. He hardly moved away from her, and did her service with utmost care and devoutness. One day, she uttered in feeble voice to Ganesha - 'Ganesha, you have served me as a mother would do to her child. You continue to do the service of elders like this. May God bless you.' Those were her last words, and that was everlasting message to Ganesha. The last words of his mother went deep into his heart, and he adhered to it throughout. That was the fourth day of the black half of Phalguna month. Ganesha put a few drops of Ganga water in her mouth, and soon she breathed her last. The obsequies were all got performed through Ganesha.

7. Service minded Ganesha

After the demise of mother, Ganesha stayed with his grandmother, at his mother's father's place. Ganapathi Shastri, the uncle of Ganesha was a postmaster and had to move from place to place on transfer. So he had kept his mother at home, but since there were no one else, he wanted somebody to stay with her. Ganesha was asked to stay with her. The untimely demise of Nagaveni, left a great shock on her and added to it, she had become very weak due to old age, which further worsened with days. For quite sometime Ganesha alone took care of the grandmother, in addition to the household work, which was too much for him to manage. So she was taken to her sister's place where, she breathed her last, in a few days.

At a time when, Ganesha, 9 years of age, was supposed to be free boy merrily playing with his companions, he had to serve his grandmother, which he did devoutly. It was a training, so to say, in self denial. Added to this, the noble

character and conduct of his parents had left a deep imprint on his mind and served to mould him for selfless service, diligence and sacrifice.

Shri Vighneshwar Bhat

Shri Vighneshwar Bhat, Ganesha's father was well versed in Vedic study and he was a Sanskrit scholar. He had a skilled hand in writing devotional and other songs sung during special Poojas and also during marriage and other auspicious occasions. He had a soft heart, had a mellifluous voice, and used to sing also.

8. Ganesha's education

After the Upanayana of Ganesha, his father Vighneshwar Bhat initiated his education at home. From the morning till noon, he taught RiRigveda. And whenever time permitted Ganesha was taken to the coconut garden near the sea shore. Attached to it was paddy field where they grew various vegetables. There, nobody taught agriculture to anyone. They used to learn it by seeing others doing, unawares. Ganesha had a peculiar fascination for agriculture. During the season, they had to stay near the field where a small hut was built. Whenever they had to stay, it was Ganesha who prepared food and rice gruel. In this way Ganesha was imparted training in agriculture, in addition to study of Vedas.

Owing to work pressure, Vighneshwar Bhat couldn't devote enough time for teaching Ganesha. So he arranged to send him to Shri Krishnasharma Mayyar, who was the family priest, and well versed in RiRigveda. In those days there were no separate school buildings. The students stayed with the teacher in his house. The rules and regulations were very strict. The students had to follow the discipline without fail. They had to finish the early morning ablution and join the Pathashala (study place). There was no breakfast, except for a cup of milk. At 10 o'clock, a short break for taking rice gruel. The late comers were dealt with seriously. It was strictly necessary to follow the rules and adhered to the discipline. Unadhyayana (no study) day was the only free day for them.

9. Saint Ramadasa – a short sketch

Saint Ramadasa Swamiji was born in village Kaduada in the province Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Kher family, a rich one having abundant wealth and land, lived near Charamanadvati River. Khers were incharge of nearby five districts. Ramadasa Swamiji's father had a title of 'Sar-suba' and managed his duties residing in Ujjain. After taking charge of 'Sar-suba' Shri Ramadasa was called as Ramadasa Maharaj, and he enjoyed all the material and family comforts and happiness. He had a daughter also. But by that time, since he lost his beloved wife, he developed a feeling of detachment with all his pomp and fortunes. He was, as if by an inner call, pulled towards spirituality. A sense of renunciation possessed him. He abandoned everything of mundane life and got engaged in meditation, bhajans, kirtan and all other such practices. He visited various famous sacred pilgrimage centres and ultimately settled in a place. Having achieved great heights in his Sadhana, he became Mahatma.

10.Saint Ramadasa Swamiji comes to Gokarna

One day when Ganesha was returning in the evening from Pathashala (Vedic study classes) he heard from someone that a saint by name Ramadasa Swamiji had arrived from Ujjain and stayed in the Dharmashala infront of Shri Mahābaleshwara temple. Ganesha felt a peculiar inner urge to see him. Some unknown spiritual call had knocked on the door of his heart. He finished his evening ablution and went straight to the temple. Shri Ramadasa Swamiji, with tiny ankle bells (Ghungaru) tightened his ankles, was ecstatically singing bhajans and dancing, the sight of which sent an electrifying feeling of bliss in the being of Ganesha. He started, unawares singing and dancing along with Swamiji, to the tunes of rhythms of bhajan. It was only when Swamiji concluded the bhajan singing that Ganesha came back to his senses. Then onwards, he routinely rushed to the temple in the evening to join Shri Ramadasa Swamiji in the bhajans and devotional dancing.

Ganesha’s companions felt it was quite strange to see him to be mad after a Swamiji who had come from somewhere, an unknown ascetic! They didn’t flinch from making fun of Ganesha by adding one more nickname 'Ramadasa'. But Ganesha didn’t feel shy of it, nor did he find any embarrassment in joining the Swamiji in his ecstatic devotional bhajan singing and dancing. Swamiji’s presence

had kindled in him a kind of intoxication of devotion and bliss never experienced before. He breathed a sort of spiritual fragrance in Swamiji's presence which permeated his heart deeper than he or anybody could think of. After about a month, Shri Ramadasa Swamiji went to Kolhapur. Hearing his departure from Gokarna, Ganesha felt abandoned and that he missed something invaluable.

11.Ganesha's marriage planned

Ganesha was entering his thirteenth year. Shri Vighneshwar Bhat thought of performing his marriage, as early marriage was a custom in those days. A boy used to be between eleven and sixteen, and girl between five to eleven years of age when they were married. He had a wish that he would bring Ganesha's maternal uncle's daughter Arundhati for him, so that he would fulfill the last wish of his deceased mother Nagaveni, as well as that of his grandmother, who was so much pleased with the service Ganesha rendered to her at her last stage. So Vighneshwar Bhat and Ganapathi Shastri together discussed and decided the 6th day of the bright half of Phalguna month for the marriage. Arundhati was six years old then. The initial formalities such as oil bath, Arati etc. were carried out at uncle's place, and Ganesha's favourite sweet dish was prepared at the behest of uncle. After meals, Ganesha paid his obeisance to his uncle and aunt, and returned home.

But Ganesha's mind was possessed with the bliss of spiritual fervour kindled by the contact of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji. He was averse to the monotonous customary routine life and he felt aveRishion to the worldly bondage. His aim was to search for his Guru, Ramadasa Swamiji. His heart hankered after the after the self obliterating sublime intoxication which he once derived while singing bhajans and dancing with the Swamiji. He aspired to get initiated to spirituality, and attain divinised life. Of course, firm resolve, diligence and constant perseverance in anything he undertook were inborn with him. He decided to leave his hearth and home, and everything for achieving his cherished goal. He had already planned to leave home and prepared a Kamandala (a handy pot like vessel with handle) out of a shaven coconut and kept safely some pounded rice in it, and hid it in coconut garden. It was a sacred aspiration, and such an aspiration never goes unsupported by the divine will.

12.Along the unknown path, in search of the Guru

It was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, the 5th day of the bright half of Phalguna (Saturday). After returning from uncle's place, he moved into the house without letting anybody know of his return, and coolly went to the Pooja place. He removed his ear rings, silver bangles and the silver chain around the waist and kept it in the Pooja place, and went via Car Street to Shri Mahābaleshwara temple. He stood near the flat post for a few minutes silently. He had a turbulent mind. Yet, he mustered his resolve and went towards the west sea coast. Chitrige Bhat who was coming from the front asked him - 'Where are you going?' Ganesha gave a curt reply - 'simply towards the coast'. Then he hurried his steps towards the coconut garden where he had hidden a packet of pounded rice and Kamandala. He picked them went straight along the coast and reached Gangāvali. He caught a small boat which was ready to cross the river and reached the other bank and walked his way to Karwar. He had to depend on the mercy of the boatman for crossing the river since he had no money. At Karwar also, some co-passengers helped him. Further in two days he walked his way to Madagaon, and via Savarne-Belgaum-Londa, he reached Kolhapur on the 11th day of the bright half of Phalguna. Kolhapur is the famous place of Shri Mahalaxmi. On the southeast side of Mahalaxmi temple was Gokarneshwara. On its verandah Shri Ramadasa Swamiji's bhajan was going on. As soon as he saw his Guru, all his fatigue bid farewell and he immediately joined in the bhajan, forgetting everything else.

On the other side, the preparation for Ganesha's marriage was going on. Marriage was to take place on Shashthi (6th lunar day), i.e, the day after Ganesha had left Gokarna. The priests started Ganapathi puja and Nandi rituals, and called for Ganesha for wearing 'Kankana' (a symbol of being committed to the resolve regarding getting married and do all the rituals as enjoyed). But Ganesha was nowhere to be seen. Everybody had assumed that he is either in the house or on the stairs of Koti-Tirtha. The search for him was in vain. After sometime Vighneshwar Bhat noticed the silver ornaments of Ganesha at the puja place, only to enhance his anxiety, agony and suspicion if any harm had happened to Ganesha. Seeing his plight, his brother-in-law and friend Kamanna promised

Vighneshwar Bhat that he would somehow search out Ganesha and get him back. They recalled that Ganesha was a fond visitor to Ramadasa Swamiji and used to join him daily in Bhajans. That gave a clue. Having come to know that Ramadasa Swamiji had left to Kolhapur and also that he would stay there for some days, Kamanna decided to go to Kolhapur. There was no difficulty in finding the place where Shri Ramadasa Swamiji was staying.

Four days had already passed after Ganesha came to Kolhapur. That day in the evening he was engrossed in bhajans with Shri Ramadasa Swamiji. At that time Kamanna and his friends came there and caught hold of Ganesha. As Shri Ramadasa Swamiji was astonished at the sudden happenings, Kamanna explained that Ganesha had run away from home without informing anybody, and they wanted to take him back and accordingly they did. Ganesha followed silently. First they went to a telegraph office and sent message Shri Vighneshwar Bhat informing that they had found Ganesha and soon they would be returning to Gokarna along with him. They were very happy at the success of their search whole Ganesha was panting like a bird caught in the snare of bird catchers and thinking how he could somehow escape from them. He snatched an opportunity when they were passing through a place where there was some rush of people. Ganesha put forth excuse of going to toilet and without even waiting for their response sneaked through the crowd and vanished.

Now Ganesha was a free bird. He hurried away as if it was a well acquainted place though it was not, towards a hillock in front of him. Not very far, he found a temple and discerned. He found a hole, big enough for a man to creep in, at the top portion. One could get into it, climbing a branch of tree which was bent near to it. The dusk was about to fall. Ganesha without any delay, climbed the tree and got into the cavern of temple dome. It was inhabited by birds and bats, which flew away as he entered. He cleaned some space, and spread his upper cloth and rested happily, with a sigh of relief. The egg of knowledge was being hatched in the dark cavern; the fervour of devotion had transgressed the physical need to hunger and thirst. It was all around silent but for the chiming of the bells heard from afar, from the palace of Kolhapur.

He was awake an hour before dawn. Being quite aware and cautious of the possible critical situation before him, he got down through the tree branch, and

went to the river flowing nearby. Having finished his morning ablution, he drank the water stomach full, filled his Kamandala with water and returned to his hiding place. Like that he spent three days.

The other side, when Ganesha slipped away, Kamanna and his friends felt extremely sorry, but tried to search him again, bit the falling darkness made it impossible for them. They reported to the police, explaining his features. But the police also could do anything. Then, Kamanna along with the policemen, came to the temple of Gokarneshwara where Shri Ramadasa Swamiji was doing bhajans. Asking the police to stay outside, they went in and saw the Swamiji alone doing bhajans. But Ganesha was not to be found there!

They didn't know what to do. They requested Ramadasa Swamiji to retain Ganesha with him if he turned up to him. But Swamiji told – "You have already lodged complaint with the police, regarding missing of Ganesha and moreover you have brought two constables with you. Therefore I'm helpless to retain Ganesha in case he returned to me". Kamanna and his friends had no answer. Do they returned to Gokarna, and informed all the matter to Vighneshwar Bhat. Then Vighneshwar Bhat himself was compelled to go to Kolhapur and meet Ramadasa Swamiji. He gave in writing to Swamiji, that he may retain Ganesha, for which they had no objection. Verbally also he besought Swamiji to be kind to the needful if Ganesha returned to him. Then Vighneshwar Bhat returned to Gokarna, only with a prayer to God for the safe keeping of Ganesha wherever he be.

After spending a few days in the temple on the hillock, Ganesha made way slowly towards the courtyard of Gokarneshwara temple attached to Shri Mahalaxmi temple. Ramadasa Swamiji was on the verge of leaving for Ghargholi, where Shri Ramanavani was to be celebrated. Ganesha came just in time and paid obeisance to the feet of Ramadasa Swamiji. Ganesha though quite tired of hunger since three days, had the same stubborn mind. Ramadasa Swamiji sensed his plight, as a mother would do regarding her child. He made arrangements for his food and proceeded to Ghargholi.

Ganesha left Kolhapur, next morning and via Miraj, proceeded by foot to Pandharpur, where he stayed on the Ramanavani day. On the next day, he went to a place called Gondhavale. Shri Gondhavalekar Maharaj, a Swamiji, belonging to Shri Samarth Ramadasa tradition, allowed Ganesha to stay in his Matt. After

four days, taking the permission of Shri Gondhavalekar Maharaj, he moved to Sajjangadha, via Pandharpur. Sajjangadha was the place where Shri Samarth Ramadasa, the Guru of Shivaji Maharaj had stayed and performed penance. His samadhi is also present there. Ganesha had the Darshana of deities, Rama, Sita, Lakshman and Anjaneya, the cherished deities of Shri Samarth Ramadasa, and visited the samadhi of Shri Samarth Ramadasa. It was about two miles, up the hill, from Sajjangadha Township.

By the time Ganesha arrived at Sajjangadha, Shri Ramadasa Swamiji had left for Vayi, to see his Guru Shri Chounde Swami Maharaj. There was a cow-pen. It was a cow-stall (Go-shala) worth seeing for someone interested in rearing of cows. Having heard about it, Ganesha who had great liking for cows, wanted to visit it. He stayed there that night for rest, proceeded next morning and reached Satara. It was Vaishakha Shukla Ekadashi. Ganesha searched for a special place, for his special woRiship. He came to know a sacred spot, Pancha Ganga Tirtha, where Shri Samarth Ramadasa had performed penance, was about five miles away from the place. He reached there, completed the special woRiship he wanted to do and returned in the afternoon. Walking barefooted left him with sore feet. Despite the burning sun, blessings feet, his intense craving to see his Guru took him forward. The pang of separation from his master, flowed in a song:

Being engrossed in the ecstasy of devotion

I have left behind hearth and home.

Embarked upon the path unknown

In search of you, Oh Guru! Only succour to me unknown!

Shorn off all the shackles of the Earth

Sticking on to the path sublime,

Not minding fatigue, hunger and thirst

I plod on, silently with resolve stubborn.

Move on I must with the only strength

Of the drop of devotion to quench my thirst

Happiness or sorrow pleasure or pain

I strive unstopped, must the Goal attain.

Without caring for the pain, as he was traveRishing the way, the day was drawing to a close and dusk was falling. As the sun descended down in the western horizon, cool breeze started blowing providing a little comfort. The fatigue of the travel and so far overlooked hunger pinching in the stomach, forced him to seek some shelter and rest. Still managing himself as he walked for a while, he noticed at the end of the eyesight a fire. He approached the fire to see some boys were sitting and chatting. Some cows were tied to the tree by the side. They had come from Satara, taking the cows further to Vaayi. They noticed the sorry plight of Ganesha, made him to stay with them, and were kind to share their food with him. Ganesha could not refuse their friendly offer. When stomach was satisfied he asked them how far was Vaayi. The reply was that it was still seven miles away. Having walked, eight miles from Satara, that too in empty stomach, the body could not resist the overcoming doze. As he stretched himself under the tree he fell fast asleep.

13.Training in fostering the cows

Ganesha got up before dawn, and started dragging his steps towards Vaayi, and limping and inching the way reached Vaayi at about 8 o'clock and arrived at the cow-pen of Chaundeshwar Swami. But neither Ramadasa nor his Guru Chaundeshwar Swami was there. However, Shri Datta Rao and Shri Damodar Bova, both the disciples of Shri Chaundeshwar Swami were there. Seeing the sorrowful condition of Ganesha's torn sole and foot, they pitied at the sight and made him stay with them till the wounds were cured. During this period, Ganesha followed a routine of going to river Krishna nearby early in the morning. After finishing his morning ablutions and morning prayers, he used to come back to Datta Rao and Damodar Bova. He learnt from them how to take care of and foster the cows, which included, washing them, supplying fodder, and also treating them whenever necessary. He was so happy to serve the cows which he was so

fond of. Every day, during Sandhya-Vandanam (The morning and evening oblations and prayers), the Vedic Mantra — 'Sham no astu dvipade, Sham Chatuspade' ~ (May good happen to beings with two legs and beings with four legs) which is pregnant with such a vast meaning was the source of inspiration for him to develop such a keen interest in fostering the animals.

Shri Ramadasa Swamiji had gone to Ujjain from Vaayi. Ganesha decided to go there. He walked the twenty miles from Vaayi to Pune. From Pune he had to go to Ujjain by train, for which he had no money. Thinking about it, rather worried about how to go further, he spent three days in the surroundings of Pune Railway Station. On the fourth day, at 9 o'clock at night, one saintly person, by name Datta Maharaj got down from the train, and noticed a bright—eyed young boy, but with - so to say – a depressed face sitting at a distance. He got somehow pity about him and enquired his whereabouts and purpose. Then Ganesha submitted - 'Revered, I am from Gokarna. I want to go to Ujjain to see my Guru Shri Ramadasa'. Hearing this Shri Datta Maharaj, arranged to buy a ticket for him also and took him to Mumbai. He made Ganesha to stay with him for eight days with him at Girgaon, at the side hall of Shri Lakshminarayan Mandir. Noticing the torn-out dhoti of Ganesha, Shri Datta Maharaj got a pair of new dhotis, one to wear and one for upper cover, and further asked whether he needed anything else. Ganesha requested for two books, 'RiRigveda Samhita' and 'Dasha-bodha'. Though Datta Maharaj was pleased to get him readily anything Ganesha wanted, he did not ask for anything else, not even money or any material. Shri Datta Maharaj was extremely pleased to see such a faith and adherence to Yama and Niyamas in such a young boy. Next day, he got the books for him and took him to the station master of Nagpur, requesting that he should see that Ganesha reaches Ujjain.

The station master of Nagpur, on his own responsibility showed him Nasik, Tryambakeshwar and started off by ItaRishi train. But at Manmad railway station he got down to drink water, and at that time the train had left. The station master of Nagpur then kept his luggage at the station master of Manmad with word that it should be handed over to one by name Ganesha, if he approached him, and then returned to Nagpur. But how could Ganesha know of it? He remembered one Godavaribai of Bhusaval who had stayed earlier at Gokarna. Somehow he reached Bhusaval and after enquiry found her. She was very surprised and happy

to see Ganesh. On hearing what happened at the station she asked him to stay at her house.

When Godavaribai had stayed in Gokarna for some time, her house was on the way to Ganesha's Pathashala. He had become quite familiar and friendly to her since, he, when came to know that she was a very pious lady, used to help her in getting puja materials etc. That was the reason for her becoming so happy on seeing him. Next day she took him to the Bhusaval railway station and told the master all that happened. He sent a wire to Manmad station and got to know that the things were intact. Then Godavaribai sent Ganesha to Manmad. The station master returned the things to Ganesha, and in addition he gave ten rupees given by the station master of Nagpur. Ganesha thanked him and came back and thanked Godavaribai also. She insisted Ganesha on staying some more days and offered him sumptuous hospitality. And next day sent him off with great love, good wishes and with motherly affection.

14.Journey to Ujjain

From Bhusaval Ganesha reached Ujjain via Khandwa and Khedighat. He stayed in the court-yard of Ganapati Temple in the Pandhariba Mohalla. The surrounding area was mostly populated by brahmins. When he enquired there, he was told that Ramdas Swamiji stayed with Govind Rao Joshi, in the vicinity. When he went there he found that Ramdas Swamiji was not there, but his mother-in-law, an old lady and daughter Sundarbai were staying there. They welcomed Ganesha heartily. When Ramadasa Swamiji was in Gokarna, both of them had visited and stayed for some time, hence Ganesha knew them quite well. The mother-in-law told, on enquiry, that Ramadasa Swamiji had gone to Mahatpur along with Musatai, his sister-in-law, to decide the marriage of his daughter, and also that he would be back in three four days. On his return, when he saw Ganesha, he felt very happy and also expressed that half the burden of preparation of the marriage was relieved, when Ganesha was by the side for help and Ganesha would manage things sincerely.

They all went to Mahatpur two days before the marriage. The marriage, went on well. The mother-in-law presented valuables and other necessary items to the couple.

Ujjain is a very old historical city, of which we find references in the ancient literature. It is mentioned in the works of Vyasa, Kalidas, Bhojaraj, Bana Bhat etc. The Mahakaleshwar Linga, in Ujjain is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas.

15.Observance of Chaturmasya (4 months scheduled tapas)

The full moon day of the month Ashaadha is known as Guru-Purnima, on which the Chaturmasya vow begins. Guru Ramadasa Swamiji used to get up early at dawn, go to Kshipra, the nearby river, finish bath and taking cymbals, and go to Mahakaleshwar temple, singing Bhajans. Ganesha also used to follow him. Again in the evening, he used to have bath in Kshipra, have 'darshan' of Mahakaleshwar, and sing bhajans and dance for about three hours in the Rama temple, by the side of Mahakaleshwar. Sundartai, the daughter of Ramadasaji and aunt Musatai also usually joined them at that time. During the Chaturmasya period Ganesha learnt the culinary skills of Maharashtra. He learnt to make pulka, roti, puri, pheni, chiroti etc. Having finished cooking at noon, he used to go for 'Madhukari' for himself and used to feed on madhukaris only. Thus concluded the vow of Chaturmasya.

After Chaturmasya, Navaratri approached. Ganesha had the opportunity of having the darshan of the deity (Devi) said to have been woRishipped by Vikramaditya. During these four months stay at Ujjain he visited the Vedha-shala, the astronomical observatory, which had several devices and instruments of astronomical observations.

After the full-moon day of Kartika, they all went to Jhansi. The queen of Jhansi was the grandmother of the mother-in-law of Ramadasji. She recalled and narrated the stories of the royal family, their encounters with the British etc.

From Jhansi, they proceeded to Brahmvarta, via Kanpur. Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati Tembe Swamiji, after taking to Sanyasa had observed penance (tapas), for three years at that place. Ramadasji, and Ganesha stayed there for three months doing meditation, Japa and penance. Then from there, they went to Prayag, and stayed one month during 'Makara' and did their spiritual practices at the confluence of Triveni.

16.Meeting with Guru and Parama Guru

Ramadasa Swamiji, along with his associates went to Kashi (Benares) from Prayag, and stayed at Balak Ram Mandir of Shri Chaundeshwar Swamiji. Within a few days Shri Chaundeshwar Swamiji himself arrived there. It was a blessed time for Ganesha to be in the presence of his Guru and Paramaguru. Chaundeshwar Swamiji was very simple and serene by nature, and he was greatly compassionate with animals and birds. That is why he was maintaining a Go-shala at Satara, leading a simple life of detachment and penance himself. Ramadasa Swamiji welcomed Shri Chaundeshwar Swamiji with great reverence and humility, touching his feet and paying obeisance, which Ganesha followed. When Ganesha was introduced to Paramaguru, both were extremely happy.

The Balak Ram Mandir at Kashi, was built in the same fashion as the one at Sajjan-Gadh. There are idols of Rama, Lakshmana and Seeta, and Anjaneya, also below, the idol of Samarth Ramadasa and Padukas. It was got built by Chaundeshwar Swamiji.

The ninth day of the dark half of the month Magha, is famous as Dasa-Navami. In Maharashtra it is celebrated as the Maha-Samadhi day of Samarth Ramadas. Ganesha celebrated Dasa Navami joyously, at the presence of Ramadasa Swamiji and Parama Guru Chaundeshwar Swamiji. Thereafter Shri Chaundeshwar Swamiji went to Satara. Mahashivaratri was approaching, on a few days. Ramadasa Swamiji decided to go to Nepal to celebrate Mahashivaratri. He reached Birganj, situated at the border. ButBut he could not obtain visa. So he returned to Prayag. On his way back, they visited Janakpur, Sitamandi and Ayodhya. They stayed in the Dharmashala, built by Shri Narayan Rao Potnis. It was near Venumadhav Temple. Ramadasa Swamiji wanted to celebrate Shri Rama Janmotsava, and as a part of it started Bhajans. He had his own speciality in his way of woRishipping. He did not give much importance to the external paraphernalia and show, with garlands, decorations etc. He was more inclined to inner Puja, and simple ways of celebrations. During mental-puja, within a short time he used to become totally introvert and forget the surroundings. This left a deep impression on the young mind of Ganesh. He too, then used to sit in meditation, at a short distance and get immersed in it, even after his Guru finished his meditation and came out. Ramdasaji, then used to come out silently

so as not to disturb Ganesha, which gave great impetus to the practice of Ganesha and served as the initial lesson for his further life of intense Sadhana.

From the 1st day of Chaitra Shukla (bright half of Chaitra) till the eighth day they performed meditation, Bhajans with dancing etc. They concluded the celebration on the ninth day, and returned to Ujjain. On learning Ramadasji's return to Ujjain, his brother Yashvant Rao along with some elderly persons from the village of Khadaude, came to him and requested to come there and stay with them for some days. Ramadasa Swamiji agreed, but on the condition that only if they conduct 'Rama-nama-Saptaha' (seven days continuous performance of Rama Nama Bhajans). They were too happy and arranged Ramanama Saptaha.

17.Ramanama Saptaha at Khadaude

Ganesha knew by heart all the Bhajans which Shri Ramadasa Swamiji was singing. Continuous travel, and constant adherence to his Japa, meditation and spiritual practices, had a telling effect on the health of Shri Ramadasji. Some eminent elders of the village and brother Yashavant Rao requested him to take intermittent rest and permit Ganesha to continue Bhajan and dancing. Accordingly Ganesha performed the Bhajans very well. At the end of each Bhajan he danced and circumambulated around his Guru and paid obeisance. He interspersed the Vedic mantras too, (such as 'Etat Samagayannaste, Bhadram Karnebhih' etc.) in between the Bhajans, merging them to the tune and rhythm - which exuded the fragrance of hidden Vedic culture in him, and at the same time, gave immense happiness to his Guru. Like this, they joyfully concluded the seven days of Ramanama Bhajan. On the last day all the people of the village were distributed 'Prasad' and all were fed.

After the Saptaha, the next day Ramadasa Swamiji informed that he would go into Samadhi for seven days. Ganesha felt anxious and politely requested him to take rest for some days, since he was quite tired and was week due to the continuous Bhajans, and sleepless nights. But Ramadasa Swamiji's resolve was firm. Ganesha had seen earlier on two occasions when Ramadasaji took up Samadhi for long periods like this - once in the small room, by the side of Guruliniga temple of Gokarna, and once again at Khatriva (near Uijain) in a small room in his old house. He had also noticed that when he (Guru) returned to

waking state after the period of long Samadhi, his body would be very week due to fatigue, and it took a week or two to resume normal health and strength. When he sat in Samadhi, the doors used to be shut and made soundproof by plastering with mud, on the gaps of doors, and somebody used to be always at the door as a guard. This was the procedure followed whenever he sat for Samadhi for long duration.

18.Passing away of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji

As per the wish of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji a room was made ready on the first floor of a house in a secluded place at Khadaude. That day evening Guru Ramadasa Swamiji took his bath, finished routine rites and went into the room prepared for the purpose, and sat in meditation for Samadhi. As was told, the door was closed and locked. Ganesha was appointed to guard at the door.

Guruji before going to the morning rites, handed over the idol of Pattabhiram and Visnu Saligrama to Ganesha and asked him to woRiship daily and also to take care of the daughter seven year old Sundartai. He told his brother Yashwant Rao also to take care of them. Ganesha used to go to the place of the Samadhi room every day, after doing the puja of Shri Rama and Visnu Saligrama.

After Seven days, hundreds of the people of the village, doing the Bhajans, opened the door. They found that the body of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji was leaning against the wall, his position of padmasana was slackened. His soul had left the body and merged in the Infinite. At that time a saint Yogi called Maunibaba had come to see Ramadasa Swamiji. He told that the soul of Ramadasa Swamiji had left the body through the crest of the head. His final rites were performed at the banks of river Charmandvati.

Ramadasa Swamiji, who had lived most of the time in Ujjain, having visited all the sacred places and pilgrimage centres of India, wanted to return to Ujjain and settle there, pursuing his spiritual Sadhana. But destiny had a different plan. On the request of the people of his birth place, he came to Khadaude of Indore. Some inner call had attracted him to come there. His body was destined to be one with the soil of his birth place.

After the demise of Guru Ramadasa Swamiji, Ganesha stayed in Khadaude for fourteen days. On the completion of all the obsequies, he came to Ujjain, along with Sundartai, the daughter of his Guru. The grief of mother-in-law of Ramadasa Swamiji and Musatai knew no bounds when they saw Ganesha and Sundartai. Ganesha was totally speechless. After sometime he handed over the idol of Pattabhirama and Visnu Saligrama to them. Next day, paying due reverence and obeisance to mother-in-law and Musatai, he took leave of them, for Gokarna. One by name Narayana Upadhya (who nickname was 'stubborn boy'), who was staying with the members of the family of Ramadasa Swamiji, at their service, agreed to accompany him. They returned to Gokarna via Mumbai.

In the company of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji, Ganesha got introduced to entire Bhakti—yoga, the yoga of devotion. He got fully acquainted with the cooking method of northern India. He had wide travelling which gave him experience of life and the world around. More importantly he got the taste of spiritual experiences. But his thirst for spirituality was not satiated. And, he got engaged in search of a suitable master, the Guru.

19.Shri Balavanta Rao Bhagavata

When Rani Ahalyabai of Indore, developed detachment and came to Gokarna and was engaged in meditation, and other spiritual practices, she got a choultry built to facilitate the saints and devotees coming to this pilgrimage centre. She established 'Revaleshwar Linga' and made arrangements for woRiship. In this Choultry Shri Balavanta Rao was the manager, making arrangements for the stay of devotees.

Shri Balavanta Rao Bhagavat belonged to the Indore province. Being deeply inclined to spirituality he was wearing the Rudrakshi, and leading a pious life. He was teaching the processes of Yoga to the interested youth, in the morning and in the evening. He used to get up early at dawn and remain in seclusion up to 9 o'clock doing his spiritual practices.

On returning to Gokarna, Ganesha stayed in Varadeshwar Mantap on the northern side of Koti Tirtha. Next day he went to Shri Balavanta Rao who was the son of the maternal uncle of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji, and apprised him of the

passing away of Shri Ramadasa Swamiji. Balavant Rao was very much aggrieved. Ganesha knew Balavanta Rao, as Shri Ramadasa Swamiji earlier once had stayed in the Ahalyabai Choultry and Ganesha used go there. The spiritual bent of mind common to both of them had brought them together to an intimate relation. Ganesha, who was developing a very pious and lofty personality, having come in deep contact with Bhakti-marg and imbibed its spirit and inspiration, now felt an inclination to learn Yoga. He started going to him daily in the morning and evening and learning Asana, Pranayama, Dhauti, Neti, Nauli etc. Now he started getting command over the Hatha-Yoga processes also, besides Bhakti-yoga.

20.Marriage with Arundhati

When the son (Ganesha) returned home, the wish of Vighneshwar Bhat to arrange his marriage got revived. He consulted the relatives and friends and arranged the marriage with Arundhati with whom engagement was already done. Arundhati was then of eight years old, the age of being engaged in playing and fun. On the other side, Ganesha had no interest in the worldly affairs. He was more inclined and attached to the spiritual life of saints and savants. His activities comprising Japa, penance and spiritual practices, were mostly outside the home, the stay at home being limited to only daily ablutions and food. Of course Vighneshwar Bhat was quite happy that he had performed the marriage and to see the little daughter-in-law, moving in the house, enhancing its grace.

But that happiness was not to stay for long. Arundhati contracted severe fever, which in a short time, took her away forever.

21.Shri Vasudevananda Sarasvati Swamiji

Managaom is village on the banks of river Nirmal, in the Savantvadi Samsthan in the Maharashtra Konkana area. Shri Vasudevananda was born in the year 1776 of Shalivahan era (CE, 1854), as the son of Shri Ganesha Bhat and Ramabai. It was the 5th day of the dark half of Vaishaka month of Ananda Samvatsara. The sun was rising when the child was born. Shri Ganesha Bhat was a Karhad brahmins, and devotee of Dattatreya. Since he was by nature averse to the worldly affairs his father Hari Bhatta looked after the house.

As the grandson was stepping into the 5th year, grandfather Hari Bhatta started his education. Hari Bhatta was an erudite scholar of the Vedas, Dasha-granthas and also of Sanskrit. He started teaching grammar of Panini and simple Sanskrit verses to Vasudeva. No sooner, when the grandfather taught anything, the grandson got it by heart and submitted to the grandfather. His keen intelligence, alertness and understanding was a great pleasure to Shri Hari Bhatta.

The upanayana of Vasudeva was performed at his 8th Year, when Shri Hari Bhat started teaching Veda-mantras to him. But the constraint of time available after discharging the household duties, hampered the teaching. But Vasudeva did not spend the available time by wasting it, instead he engaged himself in Japa and other spiritual practices. But in the meantime Hari Bhat passed away, which aggrieved Vasudeva very much, since he had not only lost his grandfather, but a good teacher and guide. Ganesha Bhatta, the father was very aloof and unconcerned either about the son or about the family. Even at the age of ten, he had to shoulder the responsibility of the family. The mother was a very short tempered person, which he had tolerate with utmost patience, relying on his faith that mother is indeed God himself.

After the demise of the grandfather, he continued his study of the Vedas at Shri Visnu Bhat, living in the same village. When the younger brothers came of age, he got relieved of the burden of looking after the family, and with mother's permission wanted to go somewhere else to pursue further study. He came to Sangli, and continued his studies in the Vedapathashala of Shri Tatya Ukidave. In a period of just one year he completed the study of the Rig-Veda and Brahmanas etc. Later learnt Sanskrit from another well-known Shastri. His keen perception and intelligence astonished the teacher himself.

At the age of twenty one Vasudeva was married to Annapurna. She was a very pious and cultured girl. In a few days after his marriage, Vasudeva started the woRiship of Agni and also took up 'Gayatri Purascharan'. For some time, he went to a cave on the hill in the vicinity and practised yoga. Thereafter he went to Narasobawadi, did 'upasana' of Shri Dattatreya and, then returned to Mangaon. He observed the difficult vow of 'Chandrayana'. On its completion he established a small temple for Dattatreya and performed the upasana for seven years. Thus he accomplished the upasana of God with attributes (Sagunopasana), and moved

further to Nirguna-upasana (contemplation on God without attributes), through study of Upanisads and practice. He accomplished Nirguna upasana too.

Having achieved considerable advancement both in Saguna and ‘Nirguna’ ‘Upasana’, he felt an inner urge to visit sacred places. Both husband and wife started off without any belongings, never to return to the place again. After passing through Narasoba-wadi, Kolhapur, Bhilwadi and Pandharapur etc. they arrived at a village called Gangakhed on the banks of Godavari and stayed there for some days, continuing their spiritual practice, on the banks of Godavari.

One day Smt. Annapurna got fever and diarrhoea. It did not subside for any medicine. Vasudeva brought Godavari water, and bathed her and made her to give away gifts to pious women. Within a short while after, she breathed her last. After performing her obsequies, Vasudeva took up Sanyasa (the life of an ascetic), and assumed the name ‘Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati’. Wandering over the land, visiting sacred spots, he imparted the light of spiritual knowledge wherever he moved.

22.Shri Vasudevananda comes to Banavasi

Banavasi is the most ancient city of Karnataka. It is situated on the banks of river Varada. The temple of Shri Madhukeshwara here is very famous. It was an important place having sheltered various sects.

Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati Tembe, during his itinerary of the sacred places of South India came to Banavasi and stayed for a few days. A great Tapasvi and the devotee of Dattatreya, Shri Vasudevananda established the ‘Dattatreya Paduka' at the temple of Rama at Banavasi.

23.Meeting with Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati

Ganesha went to the Ahalyabai—Choultry, as usual for the practice of Hatha—yoga. After the daily practice, Balavant Rao told him that Shri Vasudevananda has arrived at Banavasi and both of them would go there and have his Darshan. Accordingly they set off on bullock cart, and went to Banavasi via SiRishi. Shri Väsudevananda was sitting alone in a corner of the inner veranda

of Shri Madhukeshwar temple. Ganesha and Shri Balavant Rao approahed him, and greeting him with due obeisance, and submitted that they had come from Gokarna and may Shri Väsudevananda be kind enough to visit their place (Gokarna). 'I was thinking of visiting Gokarna myself; why did you take trouble of coming all the way? he asked. 'We intended to have your holy darshan' was the common reply of Ganesha and Balavant Rao. Shri Väsudevananda expressed his consent to go to Gokarna.

Two days after the return from Banavasi, they came to know that some Sanyasi had arrived at Siddheshwar, which was quite near. Balavant Rao and Ganesha went, along with some Vaidik Brähmins, and accorded a grand welcome and brought him to Gokarna. They visited Shri Bhadrakãli, Shri Mahaganapati and Shri Mahabaleshwar, in a procession, along with Vedic chantings, Shri Vasudevananda paid prostrations to Shri Mahäbaleshwar Linga, and wrote two Sanskrit verses on a paper and offered to Shri Mahäbaleswar. Ganesha took the paper, which had a following verses.

महाबलेश्वर त्राहि हालाहल समुद्भवात् ।

बन्धमोचन कृतवत्तः लेखाग्रेष्वपि दुर्लभः ।।

श्वपाकोप्युद्धतेत्सेवं रवीन्द्वग्नीक्षणाच्छतम् ।

त्रातारं मां प्रपन्नोऽस्मि हितकृत् परिपाहिमाम् ।।

Mahabaleshvara trahi, Halahala samudbhavãt |

Bandhamochana Krtavattah, Lekhägreshvapi durlabhaha ||

Shvapakopyuddhtetsevam, Ravindvagni ksanachchatam |

Trãtãram tvam prapanno'smi hitakrt paripãhimäm ||

Meaning: Oh Mahabaleshwara, you who protected the Devas by drinking poison, protect me. If you cast your sight, through your three eyes, that are Agni, Ravi and Chandra, even the greatest sinner will be able to attain elevation. Knowing this I have come to seek your succour. Oh, doer of all-good, be kind to protect me'. The special feature of these verses is that, the first letter of each pada (line) taken in order, form the sentence - 'Mahabaleshwar Trahi'.

Thereafter, having the darshan of Tamragauri, they went to the Ahalya-bai choultry, where in the first floor, arrangement was made for the stay of Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati. Ganesha who was ever hankering after the companionship of saints and yearned for the opportunity to serve them, was appointed at the service of Shri Vasudevananda. He was ever at the beck and call of Shri Vasudevananda for any service, including his daily ablutions, bath, Madhukari and other routine activities. He considered it a rare blessing. One day he wished to perform the woRiship of Shri Vasudevananda's feet, with 'Panchamruta', and came to him with all the preparations of 'Pada-puja' (woRiship of the feet of the Guru). But Shri Vasudevananda did not approve of it. He said "*Getting the feet woRishipped amounts to glorification of the personality, and it ill becomes one who has renounced everything. By doing, my woRiship you are not going to gain anything. Of course, I may wish good of you and give my blessings. But for the evolution of your soul, it is you who have to strive, and put in all efforts to achieve your goal. You will become what you aspire for, by auspicious will, and incessant, peRishistent effort. Desire for fame and infatuations of self-aggrandisement will make one go astray, away from the path of achieving one's cherished goal. Realisation lies in not succumbing to the aberrations of the mind, but in achieving divinity through pious samskars*."

In this way he removed the immature feelings of the innocent mind of Ganesha and planted the seeds of actual, realistic knowledge. Then Ganesha prayed to him that he may initiate him with a 'Mantra' and accept him as a disciple. Shri Vasudevananda happily agreed and initiated Ganesha, and blessed him with 'Dwãdashãkshari Mantra' of Dattatreya. 'The company of saintly persons is like relishing honey' - thus goes the saying. So also, Ganesha experienced divine bliss and ecstasy in the company of such saints.

The life of Shri Vãsudevãnanda was very simple, his belonging meagre, - limited to Danda (a stick), Kamandala (water jar with handle) and two ochre clothes. He used to go to only three houses for Madhukari and accepted only three fist-full of food in a house. In case he did not get any 'Bhikshä' for any reason in those houses, he used to fast on that day. But the people in the village used to prepare pure special food and looking for his coming to their houses, they were only desirous of the blessedness that such an offering fetched for them.

Every day, in the evening, Shri Võsudevõnanda used to give talks, in the Ahalyabai Choultry. By that time itself, Ganesha had become his dear and intimate disciple. So he used call Ganesha to read out the famous Sanskrit book "Vasudeva Manana" and he himself used to give it a detailed commentary in Marathi. Thereafter, there used to be chanting of RiRigveda and Yajurveda mantras in the order of Pada, Krama, Ghana, Jata and Brahmana. The clear and faultless pronunciation of the brahmins of Gokarna pleased Shri Väsudevõnanda very much. Later, he gave talks on 'Vaidika Dattatreya Tattva' and 'Vaidika Rubhu Devata Tattva'.

During the thirteen days of his stay in Gokarna, Shri Vasudevananda gave a talk on a specific subject each day. Of them, his talk on 'The Vaidika Rubhu Devata Tattva' made a strong impression on the mind of Ganesh. Because it enunciated many important topics such as - How can man attain divinity through Tapas, what is meant by Somapãna, unless the 'manuya-gandha' (the odour of humanity) is eradicated attainment of divinity or immortality is not possible etc. When Shri Võsudeväananda elaborated on these topics, in a simple, convincing way, it opened a new horizon of the spiritual world. Thus Ganesha acquired the initial knowledge of the Vedic principles from Shri Vasudeväananda Saraswati.

It is customary that the Sanyasis get shaving done on the full-moon day. It was the Pushya-Purnima and Ganesha took Shri Vasudevananda to the small 'mantap' which was on the northern side of Koti Tirtha, where he was staying, and he made all the necessary arrangements of shaving, and bath, with the mole-hill-earth (Mrttika-Snãna). When Shri Võsudevananda came to his small 'mantap' Ganesha's happiness knew no bounds. He had an implicit, firm faith that Guru is God Himself; and to follow his words, and do his work suppliantly was his inherent quality.

'Madhukari' refers to the process of honey-bees approaching the flowers and collecting nectar without harming the flower; it can be linkened to a small child receiving a morsel from the hands of the mother. It is so natural and so sacred. Accordingly, in the olden days, students and Sanyasis were used to the custom of collecting a few morsels, with the inherent purpose of nullifying their ego and to enhance their acquisition of knowledge. In fact it is mother Prakruti that provides food to all living beings - as all the fruits, roots, grains are due to her

blessings. A lady of a house, who feeds all in the house, is a reflection of mother Pakruti. That is how the custom of collecting Madhukari from her hand came into practice. It is sacred, elevating and conducive to erase the ego and self-esteem.

On the second day of the dark-half of Pushya, Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati, finished his Bhiksha at noon, and at about four o'clock in the afternoon set off from Gokarna. Ganesha, Balavant Rao and many Vaidic brahmins accompanied him; singing vedic chants, upto Siddheshwara. Then, Shri Vasudevänanda told - "This is the boundary of Gokarna. Now you may all return", and he proceeded. All set their eyes on him, till his figure faded by distance and came back.

24.The sublime life of Vãsistha Ganapati Muni

The most ancient among the literatures of the world is the Vedic Literature, which is in Sanskrit language, which is the main original source of all the languages of India. The word 'Sanskrit' means 'refined' 'cultured', that which indicates the excellent. Having understood importance of this, Shri Vãsistha Ganapati Muni dedicated his life for the resurrection of the Vedic culture or Arsha-culture.

'Kalavarayi' (Kumudopala), a small village in the Vishakhapatnam region of Andhra Pradesh, is the birth place of Shri Vasistha Ganapati Muni. Narasimha Shästri and Narasammba - couple lived there. Narasimha Shästri belonged to RRigveda (Shãkhã) and he was well-versed in Ayurveda, Jyotisha and Tantra Shastra etc.

Bhima Shãstri, the first son of Narasimha Shastri was suffering from ill health right from the childhood. Narasamba had taken up a religious vow addressing the Deity Surya, for relieving her son of the illness. She got initiated in 'Surya-Aakari' mantra, and she was woRishipping Surya and doing the Japa. When Bhima was of four years, she took him to the Surya temple situated in Arasavalli. It was 'Ratha-Saptami' of Ishwara Samvatsara.

Having submitted her vow, she slept in the compound of the temple. In her dream she saw a celestial deity of golden effulgence came from the orb of Surya

and placed something shining on her lap. It dazzled like a lightening. She was, so to say, frightened and woke up. Next day they returned to ‘Kumudopal’ village.

When she told about the dream, Narasimha Shãstri took it as a divine blessing and an auspicious omen. After 6-7 months, they felt an inner urge to go to Kãshi. Without caring for anything else, Narasimha Shãstri went to Kãshi and engaged himself in austerities at Shri Dhundi Ganapati temple, at Vishweshwar Ghät. One day when he was in meditation he saw a child came and sat on his lap. When he woke up he did not find any. He felt that it is blessing of the Lord. He concluded his austerities and returned to his father-in-law’s place.

On the eighth day of the dark half a Krtika in Bahudhanya Samvatsara (17.11.1878), Ganapati Muni was born. The mother took it as a blessing of Surya and the father took it as a blessing of Ganapati, and they named the child as ‘Surya-Ganapati’.

25.Childhood accompanied by sorrows and difficulties

The child was born with all the pious expectations and auspicious indications of divine blessings, yet the childhood of the child was not so happy and comfortable. Child diseases, epilepsy etc., were affecting him severely. He looked always dull, which caused great worry to the parents. At the age of five the father initiated the son with Shiva Pañchäksari’ which the child was repeating mentally. Being worried about the future of the child the Parents took him on pilgrimage to Kashi, Prayag etc.

26.Chitikã-Chikitsä

As he entered the sixth year the father resorted to then prevalent ‘Chitik-Chikitsã’, which involved heating an iron nail and pressing it on the forehead, sides, hands, buttocks and sides of the chest. Surprisingly with this treatment all the physical ailments got totally cured.

Ganapati muni used to put down in notes many things in Telugu, Sanskrit and Kannada (he knew Kannada also). He has recorded his experience of Chitikä-

Chikitsa - “Though this Chitikã-Chikitsa is a cruel, demonic exercise, since it has good results, it is inevitable, especially in the countryside”.

Who can fathom all the secrets of the cosmic power? What could be the secret of all these ailments, which have come by birth get cured miraculously! These are all the wonders of Nature, beyond the human comprehension.

Day by day Ganapati’s health improved. A new energy, enthusiasm shone on his face. His education also was started in the school. At home also he learnt the Balakanda of Ramayana by heart. One by one he started reading Sanskrit books with which his power of perception and retention improved a lot. By the age of eight, he developed such a memory power, that he could grasp and remember anything he heard or read once. He became the champion at the school. Though he liked to get mostly engaged in playing, and being in the open nature, he never lagged behind in studies, since, when he got to study he would do it diligently with concentration and grasp the things fully and clearly.

Ganapati Muni’s love for his mother was incomparable. Without paying obeisance to her he never started his day or study. His implicit obedience and reverence to the parents must have greatly contributed to the development of his noble personality.

By the time he finished his primary education, he felt inclined towards the Samskruti (culture) and the original language of our land Sanskrit. He was just eight years, when he started learning Sanskrit poetry, Alañkar, Grammar and dramas, and also the scriptures pertaining to the Darshanas such as Nyaya, Mimamsa etc. At the age of ten, he was able to compute the almanac (Panchanga). When he composed ‘Bhrunga Sandesha’ a short work of poetry in line with Meghadoota of Kalidasa, he was just twelve years old. His further tutelage was under Pandit Venkatesh of Lokish Agrahara in the Pãthashãlã at Bobbili. During this period he had to face much difficulties with regard to his food and shelter.

When he attained to adolescence, there was some unknown tumult in him, which made him turn inward and dwell upon issues religious and spiritual. His level and line of thinking was much above his age. Unlike others of that age, instead of revelling in merriments and carefree disposition, he studied works on philosophy, Religious scriptures, Puranas and reflected deeply on such matters. So

many doubts cropped up in his mind and he could not arrive at a satisfactory approach or stand regarding birth, death, Atman, world and happenings in the world etc.

One of the paths was to renounce the world - disregarding the natural law - and perform Tapas (penance, austerity) and attain self-realisation. This is a difficult path. Another is, just like the Rishis of the Vedic times, run a family life, and be engaged in tapas, together in harmony with the consort and attain the divine knowledge. This path is a natural way. The Rishis, reared a family lineage - with children, grandchildren and being in the family life they attained to the heights of receiving the revelations of the 'Mantras', through Tapas. Young Ganapati's heart was more inclined towards the life of Rishi. He had an aspiration within, to do Tapas and become a Rishi. He sought his father's permission to perform Tapas.

Ganapati Muni was running eighteen. His wife, Vishalãkshi had been to her mother's place. He thought, it is the right time to go somewhere and perform Tapas. His brother Bhima Shãstri and friend Venkatesh visited many sacred places of pilgrimage. He spent about two years at Bhuvaneshwar and Kãshi doing japa, tapas and other spiritual practices. At that time they came to know that at Navadweep of Bengal, a congregation of Pandits was arranged, in which stage was set to test erudition of poetic genius, in a Vidvat Parikshã. On the insistence of near and dear ones Ganapati Muni went to Navadveep and took part in the Parishad. Then he was twenty.

The poetic genius, and oratory skill exhibited by Ganapati Muni at the 'Harisabhä Vidvat Parikshã' and the events that took place there are at once interesting and astonishing.

As Ganapati Muni, with his brilliant and gracious face, entered the audience, his eye fell on the elderly person on the president's chair. He asked his companion - 'Ko'asau Mahashaya' ('who is this respectable person?). His words fell on the ears of the chairperson also. As a reply he uttered half a verse, introducing himself - 'Satvara Kavita Savita Gaudo'ham Kashchid Ambikadattaha' [I am one by name Ambika Datta, expert in extempore poetry, and belonging to Gouda (Bengal)].

Ambika Datta's intention was to examine whether the young person could introduce himself with another half of the verse. Immediate was the response, and Ganapati uttered the matching second half

'Ganapatiriti Kavi Kulapatiratidaksho Dakshinatyo'ham'

'Highest among poets and capable, and of the south province, I am Ganapati. The whole audience was spellbound. But Ganapati did not stop at that. He continued - 'Bhavan Dattaha Aham Tvourasaha' [You are the adopted son (datta) of Ambika, I am born of her womb'].

Quite impressed with short lightening piece of the genius of Ganapati Muni, the chairperson Ambika Datta, invited him on the chair and apprised him of the rules of the contest, and invited him to complete the 'puzzle- solution' couplets. (Samasysa-Purana).

Ganapati was asked to complete the Samasysa (puzzle) lines, which were in different chandas (metres) and subjects belonging to wide range of Mahãkãvyas and Puranas. No need to say Ganapati excelled beyond the imagination of the erudite Pandits assembled there, and made a mesmerising effect on the audience. They were all dazzled by extra ordinary genius. The astounding impact was such that Ambika Datta himself was elated and his face expressed a feeling blessedness in honouring such a rare genius as Ganapati Muni. The congregation of the erudite scholars happily praised him and awarded him the epithet of 'Kavya Kantha'.

Thereafter they travelled over north India and then came of Kanchipuram. They got acquainted with an astrologer, Narãyana Jois. Ganapati Muni enquired about suitable place for performing Tapas. He suggested Arunchala. On hearing the name of Arunachala, Ganapati Muni felt a kind of electric current flashing through his mind. He visualised the picture of Brahmanaswämi whom he had met at Arunachala. He felt prompted to go there and he decided to perform Tapas there.

Ganapati Muni went to Madras, from Kanchi and participated in many 'Ashtavadhana' programmes, and earned reputation, and returned to his native place. Some Brahmins who had heard about his reputation and become jealous of him challenged him to participate with them in the puzzle-solving contests.

Ganapati readily agreed. One purohit, conducting marriage rites, one grammar expert, another who was versed with mantras used in obsequies, together added one piece each which were unconnected, as three lines and challenged Ganapati to complete it, which he did astonishingly well. Further again they tested him asking to compose a verse on betel-eating (Ganapati was not eating betel leaves). But then also he immediately composed a clever verse and shut their mouth. These incidents show the versatile genius that Shri Ganapati Muni was.

Ganapati Muni was in favour of social reformation and he argued against the practice of untouchability. The talk he gave in Sanskrit at Belgaum, when the All India Congress Federation assembled, with Mahãtma Gandhiji in the chair, was 'Asprushyatã Nivrttihi na Ashastreeya' - 'Abolition of untouchability is not opposed to scriptures'. It was very much appreciated. But when the orthodox people severely opposed it, he wrote an article 'Panchama Chãndala Mimãmsä', and proved with authority that there is no objection or opposition in scriptures to abolition of untouchability. He always strived to eradicate the blind superstitious practices which had come into vogue. But he was not an extremist in respect of reformation. He was of the view and intention that man should move progressively forward, by eliminating his faults and blemishes. Thus he was quite close to the normal life of common people.

27.A marvellous multisided Genius

Ganapati Muni was a marvellous and versatile genius. He was a rare expert in 'Ashtävadhana', 'Ghantã Shataka Rachanä' (Composing one hundred verses in one hour, in different chanda Vrttas) and chess also. Without seeing the chess board, only by hearing, he used to say what steps are to be moved. There was none to match him.

He had a picturesque memory. For him, to read or hear once was to remember it for ever. However big a book be, on reading it once, he was able to repeat it in the reverse order. This faculty was inborn to him.

Pursuing the path of exploration of truth, with the aspiration of self-knowledge, he reached Arunãchala. It was Kärthika, bright fourteenth day. 'Kartikotsava' was being celebrated there. He went up the Aruna-giri and sat in

meditation. But due to the disturbance caused by the cow- herds, he moved from there to the cave where Brahmana Swamy was doing Tapas, and saw the Swami, serene, unmoving, immersed in the state of Samadhi, totally oblivious of the world. He waited till Brahmana Swamy descended to waking state and expressing his inner anguish besought the Swami and said - 'I have performed Japa, tapas and very many practices. But I have not attained the real knowledge, and peace. Be kind to teach me how to attain enlightenment of self-realisation'. But Mauni (silent) Swami uttered nothing. Then Ganapati Muni submitted his resolve that he would not move from there till he got a reply from Swami. Mauni Swami, who never talked with anybody, stared at him for a moment and broke his silence. He said - "Searching the Self is the real duty of man. Getting merged in the source from which the sense of 'I' emanates is itself Tapas; it is to know 'who I am' and move in the path of exploring it within. The knowledge of the Self is attained through this Tapas only. That itself is Self-Realisation; it is the source of real peace."

It was as if a beam of light fell on the dark path. The doubts of Ganapati Muni evaporated, or say, obliterated. Ganapati Muni has expressed beautifully, the quintessence of Swami's words like this:

अहमिति स्मृतिक्वनु विभासते ।

इदमनुस्मरन् सपदिशीयते ।।

'Ahamiti Smrtih kvanu vibhasate

Idamanusmaran sapadi shiyate '

"Constant enquiry into the source from which the light of the self, (I) emanates, leads to the dissolution of it in that source."

28.Ramana Maharshi

The name given by the parents to the 'Silent Yogi' (Mouna Yogi), whom people used to call 'Mouna Swami', 'Brahmana Swami', was Venkataramana. Ganapati Muni retained 'Ramana' (removing 'Venkata') and renamed him aptly as 'Ramana Maharshi'. That name later became permanent in spiritual history of the

world. Ganapati Muni regarded the day ‘a sacred day’ when he received Ramana as his Guru who had shown him the light of knowledge.

Forgetting everything when Ganapati surrendered himself to Ramana, he addressed him calling ‘Nayana’. It is an address of affection, in Telugu. Father is also addressed as Nayana. Accordingly, those who regarded Ganapati Muni with reverence, and those who were close to him also addressed him as ‘Nayana’.

Ganapati Muni was the woRishipper of the Mother of the Universe. He felt that it is by her grace that he got Ramana as his Guru, and in remembrance of it he composed the composition of one thousand verses, ‘Uma Sahasram’ praising the Deity, in just twenty days. During this period he came to know that, in the Puranas it was mentioned - ‘Gokarna Bhadrakarnikä’ and Gokarna Bhadrakarnika is one of the eighteen Shakti-pithas (Abodes of Shakti). So he felt, he should visit Gokarna. He knew that Gokarna is a centre of Vedic Studies. He had an aspiration to acquire Vedic knowledge. The opportunity of fulfilling this aspiration was about to approach imminently. So, accompanied by his wife Vishalakshamma, he came to Kalati, the birth place of Shri Shankaracharya, and then to Udupi, via Mangalore. From Udupi he went to Vadabhandeshwara and stayed for a week at Shri Mahabaleshwar Shãstri, who was a Shivalli Brahmin, who gave him the address of Venkataramana Upadhyaya at Gokarna. He was a Kota brãhmin, great scholar having studied RiRigveda-Samhita. Ganapati Muni, came from Udupi to Gokarna and stayed with Shri Venkataramana Upadhyãya for two months. Nobody in Gokarna had any knowledge of who he was and how deep was his knowledge, how sublime was his personality.

29. First meeting of Ganesh with Ganapati Muni

Ganesha was daily going to the Veda-patha shala of Shri Krishnabhatta Mayyar, which was situated at the edge of the hill near the sea-shore. He had to go from the side of Koti Tirtha, via Nagabidi (lane). He had noticed at times, that some, strangers stayed with Tigalari Upadhyaya (Venkataramana Upadhyaya was usually called as such). The stranger he saw was of normal build, medium white complexion, and then not so attractive. It was the time when Ganapati Muni was not well due to the effect of sea voyage, and he was taking rest. Ganapati Muni and Vishalãkshamma were staying in the room by the side of the outer door of

Venkataramana Upadhyaya. On his way and back, Ganesha used to go near the door of the room, pay his obeisance from a distance and sit before him for about five minutes. He developed unknowingly, a kind of inner attraction, devotion, a feeling of reverence towards Ganapati Muni, even though he did not know even his name, and language, and in addition he looked pale due to sickness.

Ganapati Muni felt curious about this boy who visited him 3-4 times a day. He could not talk to him either, since he did not know Kannada. One day, he asked Ganesha, of course by signs, why he was coming. Ganesha told-in reply that he was coming just for his 'darshan', and if it causes inconvenience he would not come. But Ganapati Muni, in Telugu mixed Kannada, there was no inconvenience, and whenever he (Ganesh) wanted he could come.

At dawn every day, Ganapati Muni went to Koti Tirtha for bathing. Without knowing his personality some mischievous boys used to make fun of him saying - 'oh the crow has come for bathing' (Kãkaha Snãnartham agata). But Ganapati Muni never heeded them. As the days passed the genius and erudition of Ganapati Muni began to come to light. One by one, people started coming to him to learn Sanskrit, Astrology, computation of almanac etc. Still some mischievous boys showed the audacity of testing him. They collected the details of occurrences of eclipses of the previous twenty years and approached Ganapati Muni and asked him to tell the week day, star, month and year of the eclipses of past twenty years. Without being angry or perturbed, Ganapati Muni knowing well that they had come only to test him, within an hour, mentally calculated the details and replied to them. They were amazed at his acumen and command over astronomical computation. They repented at their folly and begged his forgiveness. He took them as his students and taught them Sanskrit, Grammar, Logic, poetics (Alañkar) and Jyotisha.

Having come to know of the vast knowledge and sublime personality of Ganapati Muni many prominent persons of Gokarna became his students. They joined together and made convenient arrangements for his stay and food, and shifted his stay to another house in the same lane. The very purpose of Ganapati Muni to come to Gokarna was to study RiRigveda in depth. He enquired if any copy of RiRigveda is available with any one. In those days printed books were not available. Only a few kept the manuscript copies, very safely with them, and never

gave to outside their safe custody. One, by name Anantha Upadhyaya agreed to allow Ganapati Muni to come to his house and study RiRigveda. Accordingly, Ganapati Muni started going to his house for an hour or so, and read the RiRigveda manuscript and return. Upadhyaya was surprised and jokingly (or sarcastically) expressed himself to his students saying - 'This queer Shãstri! thinks that reading an hour a day is enough! To learn RiRigveda 3-4 years are also inadequate!' After eight days, Ganapati Muni, having completed reading RiRigveda Samhitä, returned the book, thanking him. Upadhyaya expressed his astonishment, and exclaimed - '0h! Have you already finished it? Tell me what you have learnt, let us see!' Ganapati Muni politely agreed and sat down to chant. What a wonder! The verses of RiRigveda started flowing with his sonorous voice, without break. Upadhyaya got the glimpse of the super-normal power of comprehension and intelligence. He bowed down humbly and begged his pardon.

The Vedas have come down over thousands of years by oral tradition, yet having no distortion in their form, keeping intact their original structure, which is its own speciality. In the later centuries they were recorded on the palm-leaves. The Vedas are nobody's construction or composition. The mantras revealed to Rishis when they were in a level of supreme consciousness, beyond their individuality. The word 'Veda' means knowledge. To comprehend the deep inner meanings of these Vedas was the aspiration of Ganapati Muni, which, he considered, is to be attained only through Tapas. That is why he wanted to perform Tapas and for that purpose, he selected 'Umamaheshwar Upavana' as the right place.

'Umã-Maheshwar Upavana' is a beautiful spot attached to the sea shore, considered to be a sacred spot by the saints, devotees, Tapaswis and also nature-lovers who lived in the range of ShataShringa hills. Couched in the bottom of the hill lie huge rocks, as though in sublime slumber and on the western side lies the endless, roaring ocean. This spot attracted Ganapati Muni. On the hill there is Umã-Maheshwara Linga, representing Prakruti and Purusha, and also conveying the concept of equality of 'Ardha-Närishwara' principle. That is the speciality of it.

On coming to know of the resolve of Ganapati Muni to perform Tapas at 'Umã-Maheshwar Upavana', Narayana Pandit, the well-known astrologer of Gokarna, Venkataramana Pandit and other prominent persons arranged for stay,

food and other necessities. A small hermitage hut, made of coconut leaves was prepared for the stay of Ganapati Muni and Vishãlãkshamma. Daily, he used to come to Gokarna in the evening and used to give talks on various subjects at Krishnapur (Shri Krisha Mandir), south of Koti Tirtha. The topics pertained to conduct, self-enquiry, spiritual matters, culture etc. During that time Vishãlãkshamma was alone in the Umã Maheshwar Upavana. So Narayana PanIit was looking for some lady who could stay with her and help in cooking. He could not find anyone ready to go to that lonely place, to stay with unacquainted persons, whose language was also being unknown to them.

30.Vishalãkshi Amma

Vishãlakshi Amma, born in a rich family and brought up with affection, was an innocent person, with soft heart. She did not know cooking. Ganapati Muni was a wanderer, visiting sacred pilgrimage centres. It was quite difficult for her to get accustomed to unknown people, unknown languages in unknown places. Still she, being very pious by nature, of sattvic disposition, harmoniously adjusted herself with the situations as they presented themselves.

31.Favourite Deity — come in the form of VGM

One day, Ganesha was returning from Pãtha-Shãla. He saw Ganapati Muni standing, engrossed in some thought, in the Gayatri lane near Maha Ganapati temple, where the diveRishion leads to Uma Maheshwar Upavana. It was twilight. He thought why, at this time he (Muni) was standing there. He approached Ganapati Muni and asked him what made him stand there in that way. Ganapati Muni told him the difficulty he was facing. By that time Ganapati Muni was able to speak Kannada well. Ganesha, unassumingly submitted - 'Oh! Why should you worry for this small matter? Had I known it, I would have made myself available.' Ganapati Muni expressed his surprise and told - 'What! Would you have come? You are still a young boy?' Ganesha submitted - 'No such thing. I am free to go with people like you. If anybody at home wanted me to do anything I am always ready. There are none to obstruct me from doing such a good thing. I deem it my luck if you accept my service.' Ganapati Muni seemed to be still hesitating. To

remove his doubt, Ganesha told - 'Already for two years I have moved with Ramadäsa Swamy in northern India, and learnt many methods of cooking.' When Ganesha boldly asserted his eligibility. Ganapati Muni was surprised and agreed to his wish. At that moment he felt a sort of inexpressible love for him. Some unknown power had brought them nearer together. Ganesha's joy knew no bounds. The very moment he followed Ganapati Muni. Darkness was falling. They quickened their pace along the side path of Gayatri Gudda, and reached Umãmaheshwar Upavana via Koodle sea shore.

32.Ganesha became Daivarãta

Vishãlakhi Amma was sitting on the outside platform, with her young son, expecting the return of her husband. Seeing her in that lonely place, Ganesha felt sorry. There was a small brook, flowing in front of the Ashram. Ganapati Muni washed his face, and hand, and sat by the side. Ganesha followed him, and then paid his obeisance, to them, uttering his Gotra-pravara. Ganapati Muni was very much pleased, and renamed Ganesha who was born in the Rishi-lineage of 'Vishwmitra-Daivarãta-Audala', as '**Daivarãta**' since he inherited the lustre of the lineage of the three Rishis.

Vishãlãkshi Amma was surprised to see the boy who was visiting them four times a day, while they were staying in the Naga-street of Gokarna, and asked her husband why he was brought. Ganapati Muni explained what happened and told - 'This boy is not an ordinary boy. The 'Arsheya-personality' is dormant in him, and the inmost aspiration of the boy is the life of a Rishi.' She felt happy.

Ganapati Muni, by that time already had many disciples. Each one of them had an aspiration of becoming a great scholar, or Pandit, or a great astrologer etc. But Daivarata had none of such hankering. When Ganesha with implicit devotion, without entertaining any desire or aspiration, requested Ganapati Muni to accept him for his service, the sense of self-less surrender with which Ganesha approached touched the heart of Ganapati Muni. He felt that Ganesha was one who always longed for the nearness of his Guru to have his sublime contact, and thus he was the most fitting disciple. The auspicious, unique, dormant will of Ganesha proved to be one with divine will.

After long lapse of thousands of years, setting was being prepared for 'Arsheya-environment'. The two great blessed souls were preparing themselves as precursor to it. Ganapati Muni opened the door of Rishi-life to Ganesha. Abandoning all self-centred desires and longings, in his search for a Guru, in his exploration of spiritual light, Ganesha cherished in his heart a single goal of becoming the serf of the Guru, dedicating himself at his service, with the sense of total self-surrender. A new phase of his life opened up. His favourite Deity Himself had appeared in the form of Ganapati Muni and accepted him. Ganesha, on that very day became Daivarata, and was a blessed one at the feet of Vãsistha.

As the twilight was approaching, Vishalakshi Amma used to light a lamp with the oil of 'Honne' (as that was Ihe oil used in Gokarna), and do her evening prayers. As she finished her prayers, Ganesha would ask her what should be cooked. She told to prepare rice, and curry and nothing else. In less than forty five minutes, Ganesha prepared the food, spread the leaves and called them for taking food. Amma was astonished that Ganesha was so quick. Ganapati Muni relished the curry and expressed his happiness. The culinary skill of Ganesha won their praise. Thereafter they sat chatting for some time in the yard, before they went to bed.

Next day, even before it was dawn, Daivarata got up, finished his ablutions, washed the yard and decorated with Rangoli, and he went to take bath. Even as Amma was coming out, she was surprised at the rangoli decoration, and called her husband. 'How beautifully he has put Rangoli' - she exclaimed. Both were very much pleased. Daivarãta, came after finishing his bath and asked - 'what shall I prepare first? ''First, prepare coffee in the morning and then for the noon lunch, prepare rice, curry, dal, and condiment (chatni)" - she said. Daivarãta did everything accordingly. Ganapati Muni couple liked his preparations. But when Daivaräta later tasted them it was not so good, the reason being the materials such as spices, vegetables, etc. were not available there. Later, when the care takers provided necessary things, he learnt to prepare delicious food for the Guru couple.

33.Inner awareness, kindled by light of knowledge

The world was asleep in deep silence. The roaring of waves of the ocean were piercing through the silence, in their own rhythm. The milky moonlight drenched the earth. Ganapati Muni took Daivarata towards the seashore. He sat on a rock, with Daivaräta, and started imparting him spiritual knowledge. They were forgetful of the time. Then, after long hours, they went back to Ashram and slept. Like this, after Vishãlakshamma went to sleep, Ganapati Muni imparted Daivaräta, — in accordance with his capacity of perception — the knowledge of 'Mukhya Pranopasana, Daharopasana, Vaishvãnara Vidya' etc., according Rajayoga method. Daivarata, who considered the service of the Guru as his first and foremost duty, who cherished no other desire or demand, started effortlessly and without any strenuous study imbibing sublime knowledge, directly from the Guru.

34.Study Circle

On the first day each fortnight late afternoon, Ganapati Muni came to Gokarna and started study circle for students, at Krishnapur (Shri Krishna Mandir), situated south of Koti Tirtha. Young and old, students, Pandits as well as ordinary people had an opportunity to discuss freely, without any distinction. It was not just so called study - meet, but actually was like a practical training centre, to inculcate good Samskärs, so as to develop cultured way of human life. It was, in short, a life building, and life-elevating training within the practicable realm. Students wrote articles according to their own thinking and read out. At the end of the meet, the topic of the next meet was informed to all. On one of the meets, the topic of the next session was informed to be on 'Brähmanãchara' - 'Conduct of Brähmin'.

35.Conduct for Brãhmin (Brãhmanãchära)

On the day of next (Pratipada) session, all the students read out their articles. Daivarata's cousin brother described the conduct of Brähmin, involving daily bath, morning and evening prayers, woRiship of the deity, and Anushthãna (Japa etc). Venkataramana who was an astrologer, explained the sixteen Samskärs (Upanayana, Vivaha etc.) are necessary. Like this each one talked according to

their liking. When all had finished, Daivarãta got inspired that he too must express his thoughts. He had not studied any books. He was not an expert in language also. Still, he had the knowledge of the word-forms. He had Upanishads by heart from the childhood. He was not interested in Puranas and other scriptural texts. He had a firm faith that, if all knowledge is to be acquired, it can be only by the grace of the Guru. This being his case, he started talking by some inner inspiration. 'Brähmanächãra' word can be grammatically explained in two ways - (i) The ächara (conduct) of the brahmin (Brahmanasya Acharaha) (ii) code of conduct for the brahmin (Brahmanaya Acaraha). The former one was also a generally accepted interpretation, and all those who took part in the session had dealt with the topic in that strain only. But Daivarãta, instead, interpreted as 'Brahmanaya Acaraha' - i.e., the (code of) conduct for Brähmana. i.e. the conduct to be adhered to, in order to attain 'Brahmana-hood'. He supported his way of interpretation by quoting the rule of grammar 'Tadarthye Chaturthi Vachya'.

'Brahmana' means one who has known (in principle) Brahman. The conduct is a means in order to attain the state of knower of Brahman. The practise (Sãdhanä) itself is Tapas. Even if one is born a Shudra, by practising the conduct in the form of Tapas, he gets relieved of 'Shudragandha' the blemish of being born a shudra, and becomes eligible to attain Brahman. For example, even though Vishwamitra was a kshatriya, he became a brãhmana through Tapas. He quoted the following

'Even though Brahman is difficult of comprehending, that by following (practising) which, Brahman will be known, is itself Tapas."

[यस्यैवाचरणाद् ब्रह्म दुर्ज्ञेयमपि तत्त्वतः ।

सतां भवति सुज्ञेयं वाच्यन् तत् परमं पदम् ।।]

"तपसा ब्रह्म जिज्ञासस्व" – Taittiriya Upanishad.

ऋतं तपः सत्यं तपः शान्तं तपो दमस्तपः शमस्तपो ।

दानं तपो यज्ञस्तपो भूर्भुवस्सुवर्ब्रह्मौ तदुपास्यै तत्तपः ।। - Mahanarayana Upanishad.

36.Sapta-Maryadã Sadvidyä and the Nature of Tapas

Starting from the moment one is born in this world, the Sapta-Maryadã Sadvidya Samskar culminates in Realisation.

(1,2) Ahara-Vihara (Food-movement), (3) Achara (conduct), (4) Vichãra (contemplation on the Divine), (5) Ucchãra (truthfulness and singing praises of the Lord or Om-kar-Japa, (6) Prachära (disseminating knowledge to all),(7) Sakshãtkãra (self-realisation or attainment of the knowledge of Brahman).

These are seven 'Maryadas' (the boundaries of the canons of conduct) which are to be actualised in human life. Adhering to them and following them in practice itself is Brahmanãchara. Explaining this way, Daivarãta concluded his discourse.

The sudden and unanticipated brilliance of genius in Daivarãta astonished Ganapati Muni. He could not imagine that Daivarata who was always introvert, introspective and taciturn could deliver such an enlightening discourse. But the discourse of Daivarata landed many among the audience in confusion and a sort of turmoil. Bound by the blind traditional rut of thinking, they were not inclined to accept the views expressed by him. Whispering started among them. Narayana Pandit made bold to get up and said - 'This must have been instructed to Daivarata by Ganapati Muni himself.' Then, Ganapati Muni plainly told - 'I have not instructed him to say what he has said. I did not have any idea that he would talk today at all'. And at the conclusion of the session he said - 'The example of Vishwamitra is not appropriate; Even though he was a Kshatriya by birth, he was born as the result of the 'Charu' which was sanctified by the effulgence of Brahman (Brahma-Tejas). This way he pacified the perturbed section of the audience and concluded the session. He returned to Umamaheshwar Upavana.

Daivarata had by then already reached the Ashram. He was arranging to make 'Dosa' for the dinner. He had his own speciality in making Dosa. That day he had prepared three varieties of the flour, with different types of leaves, such as hibiscus and Agnimantha, etc. and he had prepared a condiment with 'brahmi', 'bhrungaraj', 'honagonne' leaves, and also side dish of fried hibiscus flowers. Ganapati Muni liked this preparations very much. While serving Vishalakshamma,

Daivarata explained what happened in the study-session. He added ‘I kept quiet for the reason that I should not refute my Guru; but I justify what I said, in your presence’. Ganapati Muni told him — ‘What you said was right. But I had to give a reconciliatory conclusion because it was not appropriate on my part to justify and support it against all others. Had I done so, there would have been a big commotion. Truth is sometimes harsh and is not liked by anybody. People like the show mixed with falsehood rather than bare bitter truth. We need to be judicious.’

37.Daivarãta’s knowledge of Herbs

Daivarata was offering for drinking after breakfast, the decoction of herbs. Every day there used to be some novelty in the preparation of the decoction, which included decoction of Bakula flower, of the Sogade-roots, or a drink prepared by grinding the seeds of variety of gourds mixed with cardamom. Daivarta used to observe the physical condition of Ganapati Muni and accordingly used to prepare the decoctions; for example if it was cold, he used pepper, ginger and Kanakãri-roots, for fatigue, he used to use Akshate-creeper, Agnimantha, Shatãvari-roots, for fever, ‘Sahadevi’ etc. One day he prepared decoction of the bark of Bakula, added milk and sugar and gave it to Ganapati Muni. Seeing the pinkish colour of the decoction Ganapati Muni hesitated whether to drink or not. Then Daivarata himself drank a cup of the decoction in front of them, sipping it bit by bit, relishing it. Ganapati Muni, lovingly said ‘Oh! You are a Rishi, and the knowledge of herbs is bestowed on you by Nature!’

Following those days, discourses were conducted on Ego, Anger, Upasana etc. A gathering took place on the outer yard of Mahabaleshwar Temple. Ananta Shãstri, a well-known scholar from Andhra Pradesh had come to Gokarna. He gave an enlightening talk on ‘Shivotkarsha’ in Kannada. Thereafter Ganapati Muni gave a discourse, quoting profusely from the treasure house of the Vedic literature. The scholars of Gokarna got a feel of the extraordinary personality of Ganapati Muni. While the Guru (Ganapati Muni) was explaining the meanings of the Vedic Mantras, Daivaräta was immersed in attentively imbibing them. The sublime experience of the knowledge of the Vedic Mantras sent horripilation in him.

After four months, Ganapati Muni seemed to be tired by everyday going and coming between Umamaheshwara Upavana and Gokarna. Knowing this Daivarata administered him a traditional medicine. Cleared 'Kavari' roots cut to pieces, and ground with soaked rice was used to prepare Dosa for his breakfast, and, the decoction of the bark of Akshate-creaper, mixed with milk and sugar was given for drinking. With this Ganapati Muni's physical condition improved. At the same time Ganapati Muni's disciples and prominent persons of Gokarna thought seriously of avoiding the daily fatigue caused to him by his movement in the hilly, narrow path to and from the Upavana. So, they constructed an Ashram at 'Sannabele' near the sea shore of Gokarna.

Sannabele was a place where Upadhyaya family, who were woRishippers of Agni were conducting Yajnas and Yagas. That was the reason why it was selected as the right place for Ganapati Muni's stay. There was a Yajña Shãlã also. Accordingly, Ganapati Muni shifted his stay from Umämaheshwara Upavana to Sannabele. It was very convenient for the students. They came there both in the morning and evening to learn Poetry, Nätaka Alankara (poetics), Astrology and Commentary on the Vedas.

When Ganapati Muni was staying in Sannabele, he learnt that his father Narasimha Shastry was seriously ill. So, he went alone to Kalavarai, leaving behind his wife and son at Gokarna. His father passed away, and after finishing the obsequies he returned. In a few days after his return, a Yäga, 'Jyotistoma' (Soma Yaga) was commenced by Uppunda Upadhyaya. On the invitation of the Vaidic group, he went there and occupied the chair. During the yaga, he gave discourses on the Vaidika-tattva (The principles of the Veda).

38.It is a sin to destroy Life-nourishing things

The Yajna and Yagas were very simple in the time of RiRigveda. Thereafter, during the time of Yajurveda and Puranas their aggrandisement and ostentation began to creep in. Even though the is of RiRigveda used life-nourishing things such as milk, ghee, rice etc. along with various types of Samits (herbal products and products of vegetation) they symbolically offered a small part, but not the whole stock, the rest they received as godly gift. When kings and monarchs began

performing Yajna-Yagas, the Adhvaryus (the priests conducting the Yajnas), resorted to ostentation and glorification instead of adopting the simple methods.

‘Anna’ or food was created even before the creation of living beings. ‘Anna’ is the origin of life. There are statements in the Vedas and Upanishads which say - ‘I am Anna, I am the consumer of Anna Also. ’Anna’ being a form of life itself, no one has the right to destroy it. God does not eat food, because he does not suffer hunger or thirst. This is (Yajna) an act of expressing gratitude for the gift received by Pañcha-Mahäbhutas, Prakruti and and Purusha.

39.No ‘Dharma’ (moral duty) greater than non-violence

“There is no propriety in following the blind customs and practices, disregarding the Arsheya-principles of cultured sensibilities of non-violence and non-injury of the Sattvic personal disposition mingled with utmost compassion. Non-violence and non-injury is the paramount principle and ideal of the Rishi-Life. What merit can be accrued if an innocent creature is tortured with blows and killed and offered in the sacrifice and then receiving as ‘prasada’‘blessed gift of God? Animal sacrifice is a practice that developed and came to be in vogue in the Puranic period. Such things have been told only in the Brãhmana-Texts, but nowhere in RiRigveda are they to be found. Offering in sacrifice the life-nurturing things and animals is a practice which developed in a much later period than that of RiRigveda.”

Ganapati Muni who was a great advocate of the principle of non-violence uttered so, in utter anguish and agony.

“If one takes food in remembrance of God, with a feeling of dedication, it is also a Yajna. Because the Cosmic Spirit is present within us. We take food, starting with saying ‘Pranaya Swaha, Apanaya Swaha, Samanaya Swaha, Udanaya Swaha, Vyanaya Swaha, Brahmane Swäha’ — i.e. dedicating it to the five life-airs within us, as an offering, a ‘havis’. Actualising such a noble concept, to lead man towards divinised man’s life was the aim of the Arsheya view of life. It was the honest practical effort.” - Like this Ganapati Muni concluded his discourse on the last day, enunciating the concept of Yajna which was interwoven in every minute activity

of Arsheya-life. In this way stage by stage, Daivarata was opened up to the vision of the secret of the principles of Arsheya life.

After a few days Ganapati Muni shifted from the small hermitage at Sannabele to the house of Sarasu, in which he had stayed earlier. During this period discourses on the Puranic-stories were conducted by him, daily, on the first floor of the house of Narayana Pandit, which was situated in the middle of the car-street. In this period only, his imaginations flowered and took the shape of poems, and novels — 'Purna', 'Janasthana' etc. But, Daivarata was conspicuous by his absence at the discourses on Puranas. He had no interest in them. Ganapati Muni, one day asked Daivarãta — who was always following him as his shadow - why he is not attending these discourses. Daivarata politely, replied — "I do not feel like listening to the stories of the Puranas. They are full of contradictions. e.g., Shiva Purana describes Shiva is Supreme and all the other gods adore him. While Bhagavata says Hari is supreme, Devi Purana describes Devi is the supreme deity. And this had led to the rise of several sects, breaking the unity and creating conflicts and strives. Evidences of which are plenty throughout the history. Some Puranas are full of exciting stories by which one is attracted toward sensuousness, drifting away from the path of realisation. I do not want to entertain myself in such stories as would turn one away from the path of knowledge and practical experience advocated by the Vedas". When Daivarata boldly, but humbly expressed himself like this, then onwards Ganapati Muni stopped it and began his discourses on the Vedic themes, and anecdotes.

'Parashara Samhita' (which was normally taught to students of astrology was found to be too elaborate and complex due to the mention of several differences of opinions leading to ambiguities in their minds. Ganapati Muni abridged and simplified it and wrote a small digest - like book, 'Nirnaya Samgraha', comprising of only eighty two stanzas. It was then easily understandable not only for students but also for experts. It was indeed a great luck of the students who got a person like Ganapati Muni as their teacher, who was a genius capable of computing within hours the eclipses that occurred hundreds of years ago and those that are going to occur after hundreds of years in future.

Raja-purohit Shri Jayarãm Bhat who came from Madhyapradesh before, strived to revive the Veda knowledge by teaching the Dashagranthas including the Vedas to the students of Gokarna. In the same way, Ganapati Muni taught Sanskrit, Grammar, Kavya (Poetry), Astrology, Commentaries on the Vedas etc., and became the champion renovator of Vedic knowledge.

While, Ganapati Muni was leading an ideal life in Gokarna, once, as the situation demanded, he had to go to Sikandrabad. Prominent persons like Krishna Bhat and Prasãd suggested that it would be better to go to Mumbai, from Kumta via sea route and then proceed to Sikandrabad from there. They also made arrangements for the travel as well as his stay at Seetaram Bhagwat's place in Kumta. His disciple Daivarãta also accompanied them (Ganapati Muni and family) and stayed at Bäläji temple near Gib High School. Having come to know of Ganapati Muni's stay with Bhagwat, the head master of Gib High School and director M.N. Shanbhag invited him to visit Gib High School, since there was a gap of two days before his departure to Mumbai. He addressed the students and talked on 'Knowledge and Life' in a very simple way. It was not just a one way lecture, but a sort of interaction, leading to promote expansion of awareness among the students. He freely, unassumingly interacted with them to their great pleasure and inspiration. He recorded his happiness about the high school in the visitor's book and signed it. At the same time he met Sundar Rao Pandit, Vishwamitra and who were the students in the high school and waited for Ganapati Muni's blessings with his signature in their books, who readily did so, to their great satisfaction. Thereafter, Krishna Bhat and Prasad bade farewell to Ganapati Muni and Daivaräta at the port, and returned.

When Ganapati Muni and family reached Mumbai, along with Daivarata, one Shri Jayaram Shetty received them and informed Shri Bhatia for the arrangement of their stay. Having enjoyed Shri Bhatia's hospitality for three days, Ganapati Muni left for Sikandrabad. Daivarata saluted him and Vishalakshamma and wished them a happy journey.

40.Union with Shri Vasudevänanda again

After Ganapati Muni left for Sikandrabad, Daivarata set off in search of Shri Vasudevananda and reached Ujjain. He decided to stay in Rama-mandir, where he

had stayed earlier for a few days, when he had come earlier in search of Shri Vasudevananda. It was a place well known to him. Luckily, he found Markandeya, the disciple of Shri Vasudevananda and his mother there. He came to know through them that Vasudevananda was staying at Garudeshwar on the banks of Narmada, for the purpose of observing the vow of Chaturmasa. Getting to know his whereabouts, Daivarata left next day, and via Karnali and then Tilakwada reached Garudeshwara. A few day before Daivarāta's arrival, Shri Vasudevananda, one day was sitting under a neem tree, thinking about where he would observe Chaturmāsa. Just in the vicinity, there were about thirty Bhilla families, who saw him and came to know his purpose. Within a short time they set up a hut of tal-leaves and prayed to him to be pleased to stay in the hut set up by them and said that they were ready to serve him in every possible way. Shri Vasudevānanda was very much pleased with them and agreed. While he was staying there, Daivarata arrived and paying his obeisance, stood before him with folded hands. Shri Vasudevananda told him that Balavant Rao, who was the caretaker of Ahalyabai Choultry at Gokarna had taken to Sanyasa and stayed with his Guru nearby, up the bank of Narmada, and he was given the name 'Pradyumnananda' by his Guru. He instructed Daivarãta to go and meet Pradyumnananda.

Accordingly, Daivarata met Pradyumnananda and his Guru Brahmãnanda. They were happy and asked him to stay with them till the end of Chãturmāsa. Shri Vasudevānanda, every day early at dawn used to go to Naradeshwara, down below where Narmadã was flowing, bathe in the river and finish his morning prayers. At about 8 o'clock, people used to gather there in big number. Shri Vãsudevananda used to give discourses on Upanishad commentary till 10 o'clock. When Daivarãta was with Vasudevãnanda, he used to manage the task of cooking. The kitchen was about a furlong away from his Kutir. That being an elevated bank on both sides of Narmadã there were no wells and Daivarāta had to bring water from Narmada for cooking and washing the dishes, — quite tiring task indeed. So when Vasudevananda came to know of this, he ordered to dig a well near the cooking-house. They got plenty of water from the well and the problem was solved. People who came to Garudeshwara to listen to Vãsudevananda's discourse used to stay till evening. After returning from 10 o'clock discourse, Daivarata would ask 'For how many people shall I prepare food?' Vāsudevānanda would one day say 'for 100, another day, say 200 people.

But only a hundred or so would really stay. In those days many disciples and devotees of Vãsudeva came and stayed in the kutirs in Garudeshwar. It was Daivarãta's look out to arrange for all. Therefore, after the discourse Vasudevãnanda would come directly from Nãradeshwar and inform him how many people were there present. Everything was very simple there. Even though the place was far, there was no shortage of supply of provisions. Parasu Bhai, a Gujarati from Mumbai, Shenvi and Sabnis took care of supplying the necessary things required for Chaturmasya. Devotees also used to contribute sufficient money. But it was distributed to the poor, then and there as per the instruction of Väsudevãnanda.

Vasudevãnanda's presence was like a free, open house. There would be no jumbling, no bustle, no hurry, no noise, however big the congregation be. Everyone would do one's duty, without being directed or ordered by anyone. Everything was neat and tidy, without any trace of show or ostentation. At noon meals would be served for all and at night, after the Bhajan, upto 11 o'clock, light food was provided. Nothing was to be wasted. Whatever excess remained, it was distributed to the families of Bhillas. He used to say often — "Rishis have praised food (Anna) reverentially addressing 'Oh, Purna Brahma'. It is a sacred Havis. It should not be despised".

As soon as the cooking was over, Daivarãta used to chant one or two chapters of RiRigveda. Väsudevänanda was pleased with the faultless chanting. He would sit in Padmasana and absorbed in meditation. Afternoon from about 3 o'clock, Daivarãta used to read the Sanskrit commentary of the Bhagavadgita and Vãsudevananda explained the meaning in Marathi. Whenever spare time was available, he used to teach the processes (kriyas) of Hatha Yoga to Daivarãta. Having engaged himself in all the activities in the presence of Väsudevãnanda, Daivaräta, participated in Homa, Havana, performed now and then. Having studied Yajurveda also, which was important for Yajna-yagas, apart from RiRigveda, Daivarãta had acquired the knowledge pertaining to Yajna related activities. On certain days people used to come even after 10 o'clock. On such occasions Vasudevãnanda used to ask Daivarãta to prepare some special dishes or sweets, which, though urgently prepared, was faultless, and relished by all.

Daivarãta was dexterous and skilled in many ways. Vãsudevãnanda used lovingly call him 'Gaja-Tai' (Mother elephant). Vasudevãnanda never took the food prepared in the Paka-shäla (for the devotees). He used to collect Madhukari every day. One day a lady who used to offer Madhukari to him, for some reason got three rotis prepared by Daivarãta and arranged to be offered to him. After taking Madhukari, Väsudevananda told, 'Today what I received as Madhukari is prepared by somebody else. It must be Gaja-Tai only"!

Everyday Daivarata used to put beautiful Rangoli in front of the Vigraha of Dattatreya, the favourite deity of Väsudevãnanda. He was so much impressed by it and used to show it to the womenfolk who visited there, and ask them to learn it. He would say this is put by Gaja Tai.

In Gokarna it was a custom that the women put Rangoli in front of the house every day, and decorated it competitively. Daivarãta had acquired this skill by seeing them, right from his childhood.

41.Celebration of Shri Dattãtreya Jayanti

It was the full moon day of Margashira the day of Datta Jayanti. A huge pendal was set up and the celebrations of Datta Jayanti were taking place. Daivaräta put a huge, beautiful rangoli in front of the Deity and went to the kitchen to prepare 'Prasad'. Devotees had assembled in large number. Vãsudevananda was sitting silently in front of the Deity. Brahmananda Swami and Pradyumnananda were sitting at a little distance away. Some people were losing their initial enthusiasm; and were drowsy. Vasudevãnanda told — 'Call Gajãnana (Daivarãta)'. Somebody informed Daivarãta who immediately presented himself, and grasping the intent of the Guru, he tied the ankle-bells and started singing Bhajan — 'Digambara Digambara Shripada Vallabha Digambara' and dancing. The drowsiness of the devotees vanished. All joined in singing the Bhajan and continued up to midnight. Vãsudevänanda gave short break for distribution of Prasad. Thereafter Daivaräta started Bhajan again. Evereyone was absorbed in the ecstasy of devotion. As the night was drawing to a close, Vasudevananda concluded the programme and heartily blessed Daivarata.

42.Mahãshivarãtri of Sublime Experience

The sacred environment on the banks of Narmada was very much liked by Vasudevananda. That is why he stayed there pursuing his Japa, and austerities. One day, an incident like that of the Datta jayanti occurred. It was Mahashivaratri. Vasudevananda was sitting on the eastern side of the yard facing Narmada River. He had intention of celebrating Mahashivaratri, being awake throughout the night. Devotees were singing Bhajans, sitting around him. Some were yawning and some were dozing. All were on Fast since morning and there was no enthusiasm in Bhajan. Then Vasudevananda said - 'Call Gajatai for Bhajan'. Someone said, 'he is engaged in Rudrabhisheka - bathing the deity while chanting Rudra Mantras'. 'Let somebody else do Rudrabhisheka' - said Vasudevananda. When Daivarata was informed this, he immediately gave it up and tying ankle-bells, started singing and dancing. He began with 'Shiva Hara Shankara Gaurisham, Vande Gangadharmisham'. He felt a rare inspiration. Just then he had left doing Rudrabhisheka half-way, and the Rudra Mantras were still ringing in his mind. He started singing extempore compositions, incorporating in them the principles of Rudradhyaya. The dhruva-pada (refrain) was as follows

भगवन् भार्ग समग्र विभूते ।

भावित भद्रद रुद्र नमस्ते ।।

"Bhagavan Bharga Samagra Vibhute

Bhavita Bhadrada Rudra namaste"

Engrossed in the devotional ecstasy due to the bhajan and dancing of Daivarata, Väsudeväananda exclaimed - 'This looks like the Tandava dance of Shiva Himself'. He wondered how such grammatically faultless, rhythmic verses were flowing freely from the mouth of Daivarata who had indeed not studied Sanskrit grammar. Bhajan was concluded at the day break.

One day when Shri Väsudevananda was giving discourse a woman came, crying and running. She was wailing, saying that a snake has entered her hut, and her child was inside. She was crying so that someone may save her child. Vãsudevananda followed her to the hut. A black snake was creeping at the corner. Immediately, Vasudevananda told Daivarata to catch it. Without a second's delay

Daivarata held the snake by its tail by one hand and clasped its neck by the other. He looked at Vasudevananda for his further order. Vãsudevänanda, got one empty oil can from the kitchen and asked Daivaräta to put the snake in the can through the small hole. The can was sealed by a cloth on the hole so as to allow breathing for the snake and asked him to leave it on the other bank of Narmada.

Shri Vãsudevãnanda, during his leisure hours, was teaching Daivarãta, the ãsanas of Hatha Yoga, Nauli, Basti, Dhauti, Neti and Khechari Mudra processes etc. It was indeed Daivarãta's good luck to have got an excellent teacher like Väsudevãnanda. One day after Shivarätri, Vãsudevãnanda said to Daivarãta — 'You have already got the background of the study of the Veda-patha. Therefore you study the commentary of the Veda and understand the meaning. But study of grammar is necessary in order to understand the meaning. If you stay with me your time will be spent in cooking, bhajans etc. You go to Kãshi, where there is a good grammarian by name Baba Saheb Jamakhandikar whom I know very well. You go to him and do your study'. At the same time Vasudevananda got a promise from Daivarata that he would take to the householder's life (Grihasthashrama) at a right time. The life of Vasudevananda was a disciplined one. He would utter not a single word more than necessary. His meticulous words of his far-sightedness were very pragmatic. He said - "To lead the life in tune with the laws of Nature, without causing harm or pain to anybody, and live with peace and engage oneself in austere, simple way of living is the Rishi life. It is the duty of the Guru to impart knowledge to the interested and eligible disciples, without any reservation. May your life be such, and may you be able to show light to others also". He blessed him wholeheartedly. It was a poignant moment for Daivarata to receive the parting message and blessing from his Guru. As decided Vasudevananda sent Daivarata, accompanied by Pradyumnananda to Jamakhandikar at Väranäsi.

43.Daivarata arrives at Varanasi

As per the instruction of Shri Väsudevananda Tembe Swamy, Pradyumnananda brought Daivarata to Varanasi, and stayed at Taraka Mandir. Next day they went to Bindumadhava Ghät. Under Audumbara tree there, sometime before Shri Vasudevananda Swamy was doing penance (Tapas), in a Kutir. Some devotees had preserved that Kutir. Nobody lived there, Therefore,

Vasudevananda had suggested Daivarata to stay there. Thus Daivarata had great fortune of staying in a Kutir where a great Yogi had stayed and performed Tapas. Being too exhilarated Daivarata uttered — ‘Yes, I shall stay here only’.

Once the problem of stay was settled, Pradyumnananda took Daivarãta to Bãbã Säheb Jamakhandikar and conveyed the message of Shri Vasudevãnanda. He was extremely happy and said - “I must take it as a great fortune bestowed by the sacred soul.” Thereafter Pradyumnananda took Daivarta to Vidvan Dravida Subrahmanya Shãstri, who was staying in the same locality. He was a Vaidik Agnihotri, a great scholar, and professor of Nyaya and Vedãnta. He was famous as ‘Bhãmati Subrahmanya Shástri’. When he was informed about the instruction of Shri Vasudevãnanda he said - ‘I shall obey, with bowed head, the words of that Mahätma, who never asks for anything. He has shown great mercy on me’. But he could not run any classes due to his old age. Thus, Pradyumnananda, after completing his task, stayed for two days in Taraka-math and then went to Brahmãvarta.

Every day, in the early morning, Daivarãta used to go and bathe himself in the river Ganga, and finish morning rites, Japa and meditation and then go to Baba Saheb Jamakhandikar, to listen to the lessons on Panini’s Sanskrit ‘Vyakarana Kaumudi’. Thereafter, he returned to his kutir. At noon he used to go for Madhukari. A portion of the madhukari, he would place on a flat rock on the bank of Ganga, and another portion he would feed to the fish, and cows wandering there. He would eat only the remainder. In the evening he would go to Balakaram Mandir of Chaundeswami Maharaj of Ram Ghat and do bhajans. At that time Gopal Bua Brahmachari, the disciple of Chaundeswami Maharaj and others were there. While Daivarata’s routine was running in this way Pandit Keshav Shastri Marathe, who was a famous scholar of grammar used to come to Panchaganga Ghat in the morning, have bathing in Ganga and perform his Japa, meditation etc., for about three hours, quite near in front of Kutir of Daivarata. Daily he observed Daivarata sitting in meditation under the Audumbara tree. He used to call him Gokarneshwara.

Near Tarak Math of Durga Ghat at Phadniswada there lived one by name Nityananda Pandit. He was teaching various scriptures in addition to Grammar. He was a Kumav Brahmin belonging to Almoda village near Darjeeling on the

border of Nepal. Daivarata now and then would go to him while he was conducting classes, and silently listen to his lessons. Apart from that, he used to go to Dravida Lakshmana Shastri, a great scholar, who was teaching Nyaya and Vedanta, and sit silently and listen to his lessons. Like this, though he was not under the tutelage of them, but going to the Pathashalas, Daivarata picked up general knowledge of Nyaya Tarka (Logic), Vedanta and other scriptures, in addition to learning Sanskrit. This way his days passed there.

On carefully scrutinising scriptures and Puranas many contradictions were noticed. The excess of woRishipping and adoring God as a human being and human beings as God, with the purpose of fulfilment of desires, or prompted by jealousy or covetousness caused further confusions. Daivarata felt that real knowledge cannot be gained from books, he realised that attainment of knowledge is possible only through Tapas. He went straight the Ganges, took a handful of water and took an oath - 'Hereafter I shall not read any scriptures, I shall attain knowledge through Tapas only.'

The most ancient among the Vedas is the RiRigveda. At the time of RiRigveda, various gods and their forms were conceived, because it was difficult to conceive abstract, attribute-less, formless Spirit. Yet it is said in the Riveda - "in the beginning, 'Sat' alone was there. Gods and other things came into being subsequent to the creation of the world". During the days of the Arsha-culture of RiRigveda, there were no distinctions of caste, creed and sect. No practice of idol woRiship was there. There was a simple adoration of the five great Elements - the Pancha Mahãbhütäs, i.e., they woRishipped with reverence the Air, Light, Water, Earth, Sky (space) Trees and Plants, all as divine. But a single spirit abides in all these. That pervades everything as Cosmic Spirit (chaitanya) - which they called Brahman. These principles of the Arsha-Culture were all later overshadowed by the superiority or inferiority of various gods.

In the Arsha-tradition a Brãhmin as well as a hunter could become a Rishi. The paramount principles of life are five, pertaining to food, movement, conduct, thinking and realisation, all impregnated with the principle of Ahimhsã - or Non-violence, non-injury. Having realised one's true form, and merging the mind in it, and becoming one with the Cosmic Spirit (Chaitanya) itself is Tapas, that is self-realisation. Once Vãsitha Ganapati Muni, when he was in the Umãmaheshwar

Tapovan, one day in the night of full- moon-shine, was explaining these **Arsha-principles** to Daivarata. That teaching once again flashed through his mind. He resolved that rejuvenation of the Arsha-culture is his highest goal. So, leaving the busy civilised city of Vãranäsi, with a vision of becoming a dweller of the forest (the cradle of nature) he set out, and came to Garudeshwara of Gujarat, on the banks of Narmada.

By the time Daivarãta reached Garudeshwara Tembe Maharäj had finished his life's journey on the first day of the month of Ashãdha, of Bahudhanya Samvatsara, i.e., 23rd June 1914. His samädhi was made in the hut where he was performing his Tapas. Parasubhai and Sabnis etc., were happy at the arrival of Daivaräta. Thousands of people gathered for three days during function of Mahãsamadhi. After the function, Daivaräta went to Matrgaya Siddhapur.

Daivarata made his stay in the courtyard and of Hatakeshwara temple on the banks of river Saraswati at Siddhapur. A Sãdhaka (aspirant) by name Atmananda was staying in another room by the side. At that time a conference on the Veda (Veda Sabhã) took place. At that time Daivarãta came in contact with Shri Badarinath Shastri, who was a professor in the Samskrta Vidyalaya of Badodä and Shri Maniklal Shastri was the professor of Grammar, and also a few Vedic-scholars.

Daivarãta was thinking of going to Abu Hills next. One day, when he was bathing in the Saraswati River Maniklal Shastri came there. He requested Daivarãta to stay there only for Chäturmãsa and give discourses on the commentary on 'Brahmasutra'. Daivarãta submitted to him - 'How can I give discourses to you. I am younger. You are elder to me, both in age as well as in knowledge.' But Maniklal insisted saying - "You are Tembe-Maharaja's desciple, and have been taught by him the Veda, Vedãnta and Upanishad. You are superior to me in knowledge. There is no distinction of age so far as knowledge is concerned. Therefore, I request you, not to reject this request". Daivarata complied with his request and said - "I shall give discourses on Shããkara Bhashya of Brahmasutra. You have to pardon me if any lacuna is found and correct it". Maniklãl Shastri agreed to it and said - 'All these four months we will make all the necessary arrangements for your Chãturmasa, your Sädhanä etc. Please tell us your needs'. Then Daivarãta said that he would be taking food only Pancha-gavya

and neem leaves as food”. Agreeing to this, Maniklal informed a pious householder Maghanlal who happily agreed to make arrangement for supply of cow’s milk, ghee etc., required for Panchagavya.

On the 11th day (Ekädashi) of the bright half of Ashãdha, while Daivarãta was preparing Panchagavya, a delegation of the prominent people of villages around Siddhapur came to see him. The news of Daivaräta taking up the vow (vrata) had spread all around. They came to submit to him their difficulties so as to find out a solution. They approached Daivaräta, and reverentially saluted him and told — “We are all suffering from acute shortfall of rains. Therefore kindly suggest us what to do and bless us with some solution”. Daivarãta told - “If some Brahmins amongst you come to me I shall suggest a Veda-Mantra. If they recite it with faith, it will bring rains”. Hearing this, they coolly went away without any reply. Then Daivarãta resolved to do the recitation himself, standing in the water of Saraswati, for twenty four hours continuously. Accordingly, he went to the river and started reciting the Mantra -

दिव्यं सुपर्ण वायसं बृहन्तम् ।

अपां गर्भं दर्शतं ओषधीनाम् ।।

अभीपतो वृष्टिभिः तर्पयन्तम् ।

सरस्वन्तं अवसे जोहवीमि ।।

- Dirghatama Mamateyah Auchatya Rishi (Rig. 1.164.52).

Unmindful of hunger and thirst, he engaged himself reciting it and got fully absorbed in it. The day was drawing to a close, and night was falling. But Daivarata was not deterred. The resolve and faith of his Arsha mind did not waver. It was past midnight. It started raining heavily. Already hundreds of people had gathered on the river banks. They were loudly calling him back to come to banks. They had the fear of the river coming to a spate and carrying him away. But Daivaräta’s resolve to adhere to the vow of 24 hours was firm and he did not heed their cries and continued recitation fearlessly and concluded it only at the sunrise, next morning. All the people were overwhelmed and greeted him. That

day onwards it started raining optimally every day. With happy advent of rain his chäturmasya vow began from that day.

As the chãturmãsa was going on, as expected by Shri Maniklãl Shãstri, Daivarãta was regularly giving discourses on the commentary of Brahmasutra every day. At the same time, Shri Amrtlal Bhat of Maharastra origin, who was the priest in the Sãrasvateshwar Temple in the vicinity, approached Daivaräta and requested to teach him Shukla Yajurveda Bhashya. Shri Bhat had learnt Shukla Yajurveda by heart and was capable of reciting it with swara and hand-signs. As per his request, Daivarãta started teaching the commentary on Shukla Yajurveda and in turn, he learnt the method of reciting with hand-signs and swara. Again, at the same time, he was teaching processes of Yogasanas on the request of Shri Bhäsalal, the professor in the Samskrt College.

One day, Daivarta was teaching Brahma Sütra Bhashya (to Maniklãl Shastri). At that time, the person who was to bring milk for the preparation of Panchagavya, came and poured the milk in the vessel, kept by Daivarãta for it. He was about to leave after putting the milk in the vessel. Daivarata observed this from a distance, and somehow felt that the milk was not pure. He called the milk supplier and told him that he may take back the milk he had brought. The supplier asked, 'Why?' Daivarata told, it was not possible to prepare Panchagavya with that milk. But supplier pleaded for his honesty and purity of the milk, which, even Maniklal Shastri supported. Then Daivarata turned to the supplier and told him, a bit sternly — 'I cannot go against my conscience. But if I use this milk for Panchagavya, it will not fetch good to you also'. Then he confessed his mistake, and explained that, his mother had added a little goat's milk since the quantity was somewhat less; and he prayed for pardon. Also, he returned and brought fresh milk.

44.Tapas at Arabaleshwar

Thus, two months elapsed at Siddhapur. The vow of feeding only on Panchagavya, study and teaching went on well. Daivarata thought of stay away from the village, in solitude. So he went to the Shiva temple Arabaleshwar, about two miles away on the way to Ingalaji. It was a place, drenched in silence, at the southern bank of Prãchi-Saraswati. There was a vast stretch of sand on the bank,

about six feet higher than the river bed. There lies a small temple of Arabaleshwara, the sanctum sanctorum of which is a square (100 sq.fts.) and the outer Mantap could be about two squares. The Arabaleshwara Linga does not seem to have been carved of stone by sculptor. It was a nice place to perform penance.

On coming to know that Daivarata had decided to perform Tapas for two months at Arabaleshwara, the people of Siddhapura arranged to set up a hut on the left side of the temple. But it was difficult to bring the materials required for Panchagavya, in the early morning, to that place. A pious gentleman, knowing this, came forward to arrange for it, by bringing a cow, with its calf, to that place, and staying there looking after it. Some well-to-do people of Siddhapura arranged for the fodder of the cow. Maniklal Shästri, came to Arabaleshwara daily, at the early morning, did his bath and ablutions, and then recited Shukla Yajurveda for about two hours. At noon, he cooked for himself, and in the evening, completed his routine ablutions, Japa etc. and returned to Matrgaya.

Daivarãta availed more time for his Tapas, at Arabaleshwara. In the early morning he used to finish his bath and morning rites, after 'Arghya' (water offering) to the Sun-god, and return to his hut. He prepared Panchagavya, and used to do havana, offering Panchagavya. Thereafter taking Panchagavya (his only food, during that time) he recited two chapters of RiRigveda.

Being a solitary remote place, not many devotees frequented that place. Hara Govinda Ghanapahi of Siddhapur used to come there every Monday, to do Rudra-Abhiseka to Arabaleshwar, and used to meet Daivarata.

In the silent and solitary environment of Arabaleshwara, Daivarãta's Tapas was smoothly going on, without any disturbance. He felt an urge that he should write a commentary in Sanskrit on Saraswati Mantra, 'Chatvãri Väk Parimitä padani' of RiRigveda. So he started writing an elaborate commentary, delineating the deep philosophical meaning of it.

Hara Govinda Ganapathi, who knew the sublime personality of Daivarãta, brought to him one day, a friend of him, by name Saith Maghan Lal of Mumbai, who was devoted, pious person, doing small business. He met Daivarata with great reverence and submitted to him to bless him so that he may find growth in his business. Daivarata obliged him by giving him a Talisman (yantra), written by

him (on the 14th day of Ashwina month, dark half). Maghanlal was greatly benefited by it, and found development of his business stage after stage.

45.Yearning for Rishi-Life, in tune with Nature

While Daivarata was staying in Arabaleshwara, there was no pontiff in the famous Dwarakã Pitha. So, Sayyaji Rao Maharaj of Badoda sent Shivashankar Bhäsalãl to request on his behalf, Daivarãta to become the successor of Dwãrakã Pitha.

Shivashankar Bhãsalal, who had, for some time learnt yoga from Daivarata, knew his capabilities very well; and had indicated his feeling to Maharaja, that Daivarata was the suitable person to become the pontiff. Moreover, through Shri Vinatos Bhattacharya who was a high officer in the biggest Sanskrit Library, he had learnt about the spiritual personality and high erudition of Daivarata, and decided to make Daivarata the pontiff of the Dwaraka Pitha. But, at that time, there was difference of opinion between the Maharaja of Badoda and the people of Gujarat.

Shivashankar Bhãsalãl approached Daivarata with due reverential obeisance, and submitted that he had come on special errand, at the behest of the Maharaja, and explained the purpose of his visit.

On hearing his words Daivarãta told him softly but firmly — 'I am indeed very much pleased by the request of the Maharaja, who has extended his extreme love. Sanyãsa is a status, higher than anything else. It is a supernatural attainment of being established in Brahman; which emerges on its own through renunciation and sacrifice; it is not otherwise practicable by just human endeavour. If the Deity of Vairagya should bless me, bestowing that condition on me. I am ready to surrender myself totally at the very moment. May she appear right now and bless me with it! If she blesses me with it, this stone itself on which I am sitting will become the 'Jagadguru Pitha' — the seat of the Jagadguru. Then Dwäraka Pitha which is dependent cannot be superior to this 'Jagadguru Pitha' which is independent. If I ascend to the Pitha without the grace of the Deity of Vairagya, it may lead to my downfall. Becoming a Sanyasi, ascending the Pitha with all pomp and paraphernalia, adorning the crown on being coroneted as

Pithadhipati, getting hailed with adoration, eating in golden or silver plates etc., — all these are acts totally antagonistic to my nature. Therefore I cannot, any time, become the pontiff of a Matt. My ideal is a simple unostentatious Rishi-Life, in which there is no distinction of religion, caste, creed and sects. The life of Sanyasa which is adopted with genuine renunciation (Vairagya) alone can be fruitful. If not, it is nothing but a self-deception". But Shivashankar Bhäsalàl was not to yield easily. He said — "We will get the consent of your father himself". To it, Daivaräta replied — "You may get just a verbal consent. But I have come to the open, completely freed from my father long ago". Realising his firmness, Bhasaläl had to return to Baroda, disappointed.

The aspirations of Daivaräta were not artificial or showy complexity. They reflected an aspiration and culture that would be progressive on the path of the Arsha-ideals. Daivarãta always cherished in his heart a feeling of adoration towards simplicity and naturalness, totally uncontaminated by the attraction of hollow showiness and pretence.

The moment of concluding vow of Panchagavya was drawing near, on the full-moon day of Kärtika. Shri Hara Govinda Ghanapathi, Manikal Shastri, Saith Maghanlal and many vedic-Pandits were present at Arabaleshwara on that day. Rudräbhisheka-Püja was conducted in the morning and prasad was distributed to all at noon. The vow was consummated with all details. Thereafter all assembled in front of the temple in the court-yard. Addressing Daivarata, Shri Maghanlal spoke — "We all pray, may you bless us and advise us. We are ready to do our best to fulfil the aims and ideals shown by you". Then Daivaräta explained his further objectives and goals in the following words — 'Rejuvenation of Arsha-culture (the culture of vedic Rishis) is the main goal of my life. With that purpose I resolve here in the sacred presence of Arabaleshwar to materialise an Ashram in accordance with the ancient Gurukula education system". Hearing this, all the people assembled told in one voice, that the establishment of the Ashram be made here itself and all of them would follow it. Daivarãta replied — "Let the opportune time come. By the will of the Providence when the opportunity and circumstance come about, one cannot say. Therefore I cannot say right now here and that I shall start the Ashram here".

Thereafter Maghan Lãl enquired - 'Where do you wish to go from here', Daivaräta told that his wish is to go to his Guru Väsistha Ganapathi Muni. Then Maghan Lãl requested that Daivarata may go to Mumbai, and receive the hospitality accorded by him. At his polite, and hearty insistence, Daivarãta agreed to go to Mumbai.

On completion of the Panchagavya vow at Arabaleshwar, Daivaräta came to Siddhapur, and halting there for three days went to Badoda. He met Vinitosa Bhattachrya there and proceeded to Mumbai. Mãnik Läl Shãstri and Hara Govind Ghanapãthi accompanied him. Maghanlal's house was quite spacious and he, so much obliged by Daivarata, treated him with deep devotion and reverence.

Pandit Bhogendra Raj, the son of the royal priest of Nepal had come to Mumbai, to get treatment for his kidney-ailment. He along with family had stayed in the guest house, in the neighbourhood of Maghanlal. To attend to them, a servant by name Sheshakänt also had come with him. By coincidence Maghanlal got acquainted with Bhogendraraj, and soon they made friends with each other. Maghanlal introduced Daivarata to Bhogendraraj. Bhogendraraj expressed his reverence with obeisance and in a suppliant way appealed to him for his blessing, so as to get relieved of his ailment. He had got treatment from well-known doctors in Mumbai, who had told him that it his survival is a rare possibility, and even if he survived, there was no possibility of any progeny. Sheshakänt (also) told, that Bhogendra raj being the only son of Rajaguru Tarakraj Pandit, and if Bhogendra raj did not get any children, that would be the end of his family lineage. He pressingly requested to bless Bhogendra raj with health the progeny. Daivaräta was moved by coming to know this situation. He taught Bhogendra raj, the subtle and esoteric processes of 'Vajroli Mudrã', and also taught him the method of sucking in through genital the medicine in the form of a decoction, and expelling out. Bhogendra raj's wife also beseeched him to redress the difficulty besetting them. Daivarata solaced them and recommended to take the juice of white 'Shankha-pushpa' leaves with cow's milk, for three days, after the fourth day of menstruation and give up salty, sour and pungent things. With this they felt a new light of hope, and Daivaräta's intimacy with Nepal Royal family grew closer.

46.Yearning for the sublime presence of Ganapati Muni

Daivarata, searching Ganapathi Muni, came to Sikandrabad. His expectation was that Ganapathi Muni could be possibly in Ramanashram at Arunãchala. Maghanlal had given money for the expenses of travel. Ayila Subrahmany Shastri who was a lecturer at Mehboobnagar was very intimate with Vasistha Gapapati Muni. When Ganapati Muni was in Gokarna, he had come to Gokarna with his son Mahadev and daughter Vajreshwari to leave them with Ganapati Muni. At that time Daivarata was introduced to them.

Daivarata came to know through Subrahmany Shastri that Gapapati Muni was in Mandasa in Orissa. So Daivarata instead of proceeding to Arunachala, went to Orissa and reached the presence of Ganapathi Muni. At that time Vishalakshamma, son Mahadev and daughter Vajreshwari, and attendant Venkataramana were all there with Ganapati Muni.

Mandasa is a state (samsthan) in Orissa province. The Maharaja of Mandasa was a disciple of Vasistha Gañapati Muni and he had, with great reverence and devotion to him, arranged a well-equipped accommodation for his stay.

Ganapati Muni daily went to the palace from his guest house and gave discourses on spiritual matters in Telugu Language. Daivarata also used to accompany him, and sit behind him at the time of discourse. After three days the Maharaja got curious and asked about Daivarata. Then Ganapati Muni explained that he is a close companion and disciple. The Maharaja said — 'Then tomorrow is Dwadasi Parana. Please send him to us.'

Parana means, taking and distributing food (Prasad) after the completion of any vow (Vrata) such as Ekadashi Fasting. Daivarata was accorded a special invitation.

Next day was Dwadashi. As instructed by Ganapati Muni, Daivarata went to the palace with the servant sent for bringing him. What Daivarata saw, as soon as he entered inner courtyard was astonishing. In some cells (room) tigers were there, and in a separate enclosure, animals like deer, antelope were roaming. Unexpectedly an antelope came running, and was about to pierce Daivarãta. He held its horns fast and pushed it back. Yet again the antelope attacked, and

pushed Daivarãta 4-5 feet back. There was a small combat between them. Daivarata held both its horns fast and stopped by thrusting against the wall. Hearing the turmoil, Maharaja came out to the balcony and saw the scene. Immediately the antelope was tied by the servants, and relieved Daivaräta from the imminent danger. Later the Maharaja regretted much, and received Daivarãta respectfully, and offered him a tiger skin to sit on. He also sat on another tiger skin. He asked several questions on matters pertaining Yoga Shãstra, such as Asana, Pranayama, Samadhi. And also about some specific yogic processes like Khechari Mudrä, Vajroli Mudrä and their subtle influences and got his doubts clarified. He was very happy. A great hunter as he was, he narrated his experiences of hunting, and also showed him the skin of a tiger he had hunted. It was stuffed and looked like a living tiger, with, it claws intact. He presented a full tiger skin - with four legs and claws to Daivarata, and treated him with appropriate hospitality.

As soon as Daivarãta came to Mandasã, he became engaged in the service of his Guru, looking after his daily needs, preparing coffee, food, cooking and all.

After about two and a half months of his arrival at Mandasã, Mahã Shivarãtri was nearing. There is an abode of Ishwara, at Mahendra Giri, about 5000 ft above sea level, and a distance of ten miles from Mandasã. Annual Jãtra used to take place there on the Mahãshivarãtri day, which was attended by all the people of surrounding villages. It was their custom to climb up the hill once in a year, and offer their woRiship to Lord Shiva, who was known as Gokarneshwara there. The woRiship used to be done all through the night.

Daivarãta desired to observe Mahshivaratri at Mahendra Giri. When he informed his wish to Guru Ganapati Muni, he and Vishalakshamma also got ready to accompany. Coming to know Ganapati Muni's wish, the Maharaja made all the necessary arrangements. Since it was not possible for Ganapati Muni and Vishalakshamma to climb up the high hill, by foot, 'doli' was arranged for them. One of the Maharaja's ministers accompanied them as a guide. Daivarata, with his quick pace went ahead and reached hill top at about 3 o'clock. In a short while, two pilgrims came to Daivarata and told him that Ganapati Muni and the minister were tired and thirsty and were halting, at about four miles down the path. Daivarãta immediately took two water bags and started coming down the hill. On

his way some thirsty pilgrims requested for water, and Daivarãta obliged, with the result that he was left with only one bag of water by the time he came to Ganapati Muni. He served him and after short rest, they started up, and reached the hill top by 5 o'clock. With the help of the Mahäräja's servants a hut was set up, big enough for the retinue. Ganapati Muni was very much tired and he was made to take rest after taking some refreshments.

The Gokarneshwara Temple, on the hill of Mahendra Giri is an ancient one, built with black stone - there is no door, no lock for it. There is no carved Linga there. The hole in the earth, of the shape of the ear of a cow, almost of palm-size itself is woRishipped as the abode of Lord Shiva. If one puts any material of woRiship such as Pañchamrit, Bilva leaves etc., the flow of water below carries it away. Seeing this, Ganapati Muni named it as Dahara Gokarneshwara.

As the sun descended in the west, darkness slowly creeped in, pervading everything. The auspicious moment of Shivaratri was drawing near. The folks from the surrounding villages gathered to form a Jätrã. There were small shops set up for selling flowers, Bilva, fruits, bloated rice and sweetmeats. At about 8 o'clock Ganapati Muni and his companions took light refreshments and rest, and got ready by 11 o'clock, for performing Maha Shivarätri woRiship.

At 11 o'clock Daivarata went to the nearby well to pull water for the woRiship. As he was carrying water, devotees extended their vessels, asking him to oblige with some water for the Puja, which Daivarata did happily. But the demand was repeated by others so much that Daivarata was pulling water from the well and distributing to them, since he could not deny water asked for the Puja. The result was that he was pulling water endlessly and he himself had to miss the time of Puja.

Daivarata was a bit disappointed for having missed the Puja, whereas others could perform it in time and feel blessed. He submitted his feeling to Ganapati Muni, who solaced him and said — 'A special Puja is performed by you. With your help so many people could do the Puja. Had you alone done it, that would not have been so great a woRiship.' Vishalakshamma nodded in agreement. At those worlds Daivarata felt a blessed satisfaction.

47.Resolve to perform Tapas at Mahendra Giri

The special period of auspicious Mahã Shivaratri was over. By the time of sunrise all the folk who had gathered there, dispersed. By 8 o'clock there were none but Ganapati Muni and his retinue. Mahendra Giri was steeped into silence again. Ganapathi Muni said, 'let us also start'. Daivarata was immersed in silence within himself. Pondering whether that was all that is meant by Shivaratri. 'What can be achieved in one night of an auspicious time! All these things are just external bustle, but not helpful to real spiritual Sadhana! This was the line of his thought. When he expressed his inner feelings before Ganapati Muni, who replied - "There is no difference or distinction of time for the performance of Tapas. When firm resolve is taken, every day is Maha Shivaratri."

Daivarãta submitted - "This place is very peaceful and silent, and very suitable to perform Tapas. In the Purãnãs also Mahendra Parvata was considered to be an appropriate place for Tapas. It is said in the Ramayana that Parashurama, after he was defeated by Rãma while he was returning to Ayodhya after marrying Sita, went to Mahendra Parvata for Tapas." Hearing this Ganapati Muni also thought of doing Tapas there. But it was not possible for Vishãlãkshamma to stay there, because Mahãdeva, the son, Vajreshwari, the daughter and attendant Adhãman (Venkataraman) were in Mandasä, expecting their return. So, Vishalakshamma was sent to Mandasä in the doli, with the help of Maharaja's servants.

Having come to know that Daivaräta and Ganapati Muni had resolved to perform Tapas for one month at Mahendra Giri, the Maharaja of Mandasa made arrangements for their food. He ordered the chief of a village at about 4 miles from there, to supply food materials to them. Both Ganapati Muni and Daivaräta were taking very simple food, in a limited quantity. They were just eating two rotis with jaggery and drinking milk, at noon and at night.

There was a Nara-Narayana Temple in front of Gokarnanatheshwara temple. It was almost in a dilapidated condition, which had no roof and no doors. They decided to stay in the same temple. Daivarata prepared a thatched roof with tree-twigs, in order to protect them from the sun and frost at night. The floor was damp. He collected dry grass and spread it over the floor, to make it suitable for sitting and sleeping. The hill was surrounded by thick forest, which was inhabited

by wild animals like tiger and leopard. So, they made fire in front of the entrance and kept it burning throughout the night, so as to drive away wild animals, and used to sit in deep meditation, free from any fear at night.

No sooner than the nightfall, the roaming of the wild beasts used to start. Sometimes the roaring of tigers would be heard from very near. But they were not approaching nearer, due to the fear of fire.

Daivarata, brought up in the Arsha tradition as he was, meditating on the Vedic Mantra - "Jatavedase Sunavama Somam Aratiyato Nidahati Vedaha" RV (1.99). Ganapathi Muni was reciting the mantra — "Kleshanashana Shulapani .." which belonged to Tantric tradition. In this way, while they were engaged in their Tapas, in the solitary place, and being completely oblivious of the world outside, one day Ganapati Muni initiated Daivarata with 'Sodashakshari' Mantra, pertaining to Shri Vidya Upasana. Therefore, on the fullmoon day of Kãrtika, he performed the 'Purnabhisheka' with the Sodashakshari Mantra, on the head of Daivarata. It was as follows

भगवती साष्टविंशति वर्णत्वम्

बीजात्मा षोडश वर्ण ।

षोडशी तवमनुरयमभिषिक्तो

मन्त्रगणानामधिपतिरिष्टः ।।

'Bhagavati SAtavimshati Varnatvam

BijAtmã Sodasha Varna

Sodashi tavamanurayamabhishikto

Mantragananamadhipatirishtaha II

In the traditional Matts, there is the custom of the Acharya doing Purnabhisheka to the disciple with this mantra, while initiating him into Sanyasa.

In this way Ganapati Muni, imparted the impressions of Rishi-lineage, Arsha-culture to Daivarata, so as to make way for his further progress.

48.Simple Observance is superior to grand show

The annual day of Nagaveni Amma, the mother of Daivarata falls on the fourth day of waning moon in Phalguna month. He had to perform the 'Shraddha' karma of his mother. He was worried how to observe it in the solitary place of Mahendra Parvata, and expressed his feeling to Ganapati Muni. Ganapati Muni replied to it seriously and explained — "The method of observance of 'Shraddha' being followed today is not enjoined in the Vedas. Nowhere in the Vedas is its justification or support found. It is a tradition which came into practice in later period''.

"A simple observance, when glorified or aggrandised becomes complex, and the naturalness of faith, devotion and sanctity fades away. The observances should be simple, easy, and not complex or difficult of practice. Then only the sanctity will remain intact. In the times of RiRigveda, the observances were very simple. It can be seen, that from the time of Yajurveda, they started to be complicated and glorified. And, further during the period of Puranas, the kings and the rich people, in order to show up their prestige and status, started observing all the observances like Upanayana, Marriage etc. in a grand way with pomp and show. The golden rays of the rising sun are pleasant and nourishing, whereas as the sun rises up and the intensity of rays increases, it will be difficult to bear it. Same is the case with our observances also.

Yet, the observance of Shraddha, which is performed to express our gratitude to our departed parents has its own importance. There is no strict rule that we need to do it in front of invited Brahmins only. Feeding any creature such as cow, fish, crow etc., and satisfying them on that day will be, itself is, 'Shraddha Karma'. If one shares the food he eats with others happily, that is itself "Santarpana; or Satiation. If the poor people who are unable to do anything else, taking handful of water, facing south, remembering the departed souls and offer it as libation, that itself becomes true Shraddha".

Daivarata was satisfied with this explanation given by Ganapati Muni. He imagined Ganapati Muni himself in place of Brahmin and completed the Shraddha Karma.

At that time, the Maharaja of Mandasa sent Ganapati Muni for the purpose of some confidential consultation. Hence, Daivarata alone continued his Tapas. He

even gave up eating two rotis a day, which he was doing when Ganapati Muni was with him. He started to feed on only the roasted gooseberry and water. After three days, when he munched a wild root, immediately he got burning in the mouth and tongue and the face also got swollen. He could not know what to do. Then he munched raw gooseberry. The mouth started oozing out saliva profusely, which slowly reduced the poisonous effect. The night passed without sleep. By morning the swelling also got reduced and he became normal.

Ganapati Muni returned to Mahendra Giri from Mandasä after five days. Having spent more than a month in Tapas at Mahendra Giri, both Guru and disciple thought about what they have to do next. Anticipating this change Ganapati Muni had retained the Maharaja's servants with them. Daivaräta had decided already to go to Arunachala from there. Knowing this Ganapati Muni also decided to go to Arunachala. Accordingly, next day morning, before Daivaräta came back after finishing his morning ablutions, Ganapati Muni also had gone. Daivaräta brought out the carpet and blanket etc., which was spread in the rooms of the Nara-Narayana temple and picked them neatly. When he wanted to remove the dry grass spread over there below the carpet, a snake which was warmly lying below the grass, slowly crept out. Daivarata, dumb-founded, watched it move away. He did not tell this to Ganapati Muni. After returning, they had their breakfast and returned to Mandasã.

Both the Guru and the disciple came to Mandasã from Mahendra Giri, on the first day of Chaitra. They stayed there till the fifth day. They thanked the Mahãrãja and all the royal family for the help and facilities they accorded to them, and with good wishes to them, they travelled inwards Madras Province.

Ganapati Muni was invited to chair a conference in Kakinada on the tenth day of Chaitra. So, he broke the journey, together with Venkataramana and got down in Kakinada. Vishalakshamma and children and Daivarata went to Madras and stayed in. Shri Doraiswamy's house, whom Ganapati Muni knew.

At that time, Kapali Shastri was staying near the Kamakshi temple in a small village which was about five miles away from Doraiswamy's house. He was one of the prominent disciples of Ganapati Muni. On coming to know of Vishalakshamma's stay at Doraiswamy's house, he came to see her. At that time Daivarata, for the first time came to personal contact with Kapali Shastri, about

whom he had only heard from Ganapati Muni. Having got the opportunity of seeing each other face to face, they talked and discussed many things pertaining to processes of Yoga, Spiritual practice, Tapas etc. At that time Ganapati Muni had not yet arrived there. Eagerness of Daivarata to have Darshan of Ramana Maharshi was increasing. So he started off alone towards Arunachala.

49.A life-sketch of Shri Ramana Maharshi

In this Arsha-Land of Bharata, the spiritual tradition of Rishis and Muni has been constantly flowing. Bhagavän Shri Ramana Maharshi is one such, in that line. He is one who attained the self-realisation, the true knowledge of the Self directly through Tapas, just as the Rishis of the Vedic times. He did not teach anything through study of Scriptures, Logic or inference. He communicated to those seekers who came to him, the truth which experienced through Tapas and realised through his inner intuitive vision.

Tirucculi is a small village near Madurai, in Tamil Nadu. It is known as Avartapura. Sundaram Iyer and Alagamma couple lived there. Sundaram Iyer was earlier a clerk under an accountant and running his life. Later he started working as an independent accountant, and further got permission to work as a pleader, but without certificate. Having achieved good progress in his career, he got a house built, big and convenient enough for them. A portion in the house was reserved separately for the incoming guests, and he generously accorded hospitality. With it, he became more and more popular and he earned a good status in the village.

Ramana was born as the son of Sundaram Iyer and Alagamma on 29th December 1879 at midnight. That was the day of Ardra-Darshana, an auspicious celebration. Ramana was born just at the time when the Deity Bhuminatheshwara, after finishing procession in the town, was re-entering the temple. According to Hindu calendar, it was Punarvasu-star, in Dhanu-month, in the year Pramadhi. The child was named as Venkataramana by his parents. He had an elder brother, Nagaswamy, a younger brother Nagasundaram and a sister, Alamelu. With these four children the family of Sundaram Iyer lived happily.

The day of Ardra-Darshana, is the day when Shiva as Nataraja gave his Darshana (vision) to His devotees, in his Tandava Natya, representing the creation and dissolution of the Universe. It is a day of happy and auspicious celebration, for all Shaiva-devotees.

At the age of eleven, Venkataramana joined the school at Dindigal. When he was twelve years, Sundaram Iyer passed away. The happy family was beset with a tumult. The family which was living in one place together, got scattered. The children took shelter under Subba Iyer, the brother of Sundaram Iyer. Subba Iyer was living in Madurai. Venkataramana further studies in States Middle school and later in American Mission School. Though he did not show any special intelligence, his memory power was extra ordinary, which helped him in his studies. Hearing lesson once was enough for him, with no further need for reading. But he had no interest in these things. One speciality found in him was his abnormal sleep.

What happened in Dindigal is a good example. There was some celebration at home on that day. All the members of the family had gone to the temple at night. Venkataramana who was reading in a room, closed all the doors and windows and got asleep. When the family returned from the temple, they heavily knocked the doors and windows; they called him aloud. But Venkataramana did not wake up. At last they somehow opened a door and went in. Despite shaking him, even beating him, whatever they did, he did not wake up. He came to know of it only when he woke up in the morning. Similar incident happened at Madurai also. He was exceeding other boys in football, volley ball, wrestling, swimming etc., and the others got angry. One day while he was sleeping, they lifted him, carried him somewhere and thrashed him as they liked, and they brought him back and laid him on the bed. But he was not aware of it, and came to know only when they told him the next day.

Whether it was accidental or an attraction of sublime experience, it was a fact that someone in the lineage of Sundaram Iyer used develop the attitude of detachment and renunciation. The younger uncle of Sundaram Iyer had taken up Danda and Kamandala and gone away. Having informed his brother that he would go to nearby village and return, he never came back and went as a Sanyasi never to be seen again.

50.Experience of immortality in the experience of Death

One day young boy Ramana was lying on bed in the house of his uncle at Madurai. There was nobody else in the house. All of a sudden, he was overtaken by the fear of death. He felt strongly that he is dying. In this very feeling death he imagined that he is standing away from the body and the body is lying totally inactive. Now the body is dead. It will be taken to the cemetery and he burnt to ashes. Then what happens to me? That day when the boys took me away when I was asleep, and thrashed me as they liked. But I did not feel any pain due to beating. What was I then? What was my conditions then? Had the idea of a Jiva completely vanished and was I in an unmanifest dormant condition? Then, it means that there is a different condition other that which is now. That must be the true condition, and natural condition. Thus dawned to him an experience of immortality, through the fear of death.

Sometimes he was lying, at night, in a condition that was neither waking nor asleep. It became natural to him to remain, beyond the web of thoughts of the outer mind, merged in a condition of just being a witness. The light of the awareness of the 'Self' was kindled in him.

It happened once when he was in Tirucculi, an old relative visited them. Venkataramana casually (naturally) asked him where he had come from. The old man said - 'From Arunachala'. By hearing the word Venkataramana got excited and said - 'What! Arunachala? Where is it?' The elderly person explained him that Arunachala is in Tiruvannamalai.

When Venkataramana came from Tirucculi, and staying in Madurai, in 1895, his uncle had borrowed and brought a book titled 'Peria Purana'. Venkataramana was very much impressed by reading it. It was about the devotees of Lord Shiva. The idea of attaining oneness with Paramãtman, through a life of sacrifice and renunciation was explained in it.

51.A current of divine awareness — inexpressible, yet can be experienced

A current of divine awareness started flowing in his inner mind. This awareness, transcending the sense of doer-ship and duality of things. Even though it is beyond the boundary of physical and mental realm, there is no hindrance for the physical and mental activities to run smoothly.

Progressing in the light of spiritual dawn, Venkataramana had no interest in food, entertainment, play, study or any other worldly matters. This aloofness naturally incurred the wrath of his uncle and brother. Once he had not answered the questions on grammar given in the class. So the teacher had given him a punishment of writing the answer three times. No sooner Venkataramana sat for writing them once, than he felt, of what use all this? He gave up writing and got absorbed in meditation. Seeing this, the brother Naganna got agitated 'of what use is it for a person like you' - he sarcastically shouted. But Ramana, then of sixteen years, did not get disturbed or angry at all. He coolly replied - 'Yes, I felt, of what use is all this'. He came to a firm decision, and got up saying 'Yes, I shall go to school now'. 'Then, I have kept five rupees in the box below, take it and pay my college fees' - said Naganna. 'Oh, this also must be divine will' - said Venkataramana to himself, and finished his food quickly. He had a resolve to go to Arunachala, and perform Tapas so that he may attain the true, natural condition of experience of the Self. At that time he did not have any emotional agitation, or impulsive resolve, or mental tumult, which were quite natural to that age.

Just the idea of the divine presence of Arunachaleshwara had quenched him, his physical appetite had vanished. He took the food as an excuse, whether stomach was full or not, he was not aware. He felt, he does not want more money, so he kept two rupees back. And, just for human etiquette so that none should feel anxiety for him, and take pains to search him out, he wrote a letter and kept in the box. The content of the letter ran like this

"As per the order of my Father, I am out in search of Him. This is an endeavour, a journey of paramount importance. Nobody need worry about it, or try to search me, and spend money for it. I could not pay your college fees. I have kept two rupees here only".

The letter had no signature. Signature is used in the worldly affairs which runs on the designation of name and form. He did not feel that he is different or

separate from the Spirits, of Atman and felt, why at all he needs the designation of name, which is different from the Spirit or Atman.

Keeping the letter in the house, he parted from the house, and walked towards the railway station. It was 26th August 1896, the day on which he had embarked upon a journey with a resolve to attain the experience of the Self, the divine realisation of the Spirit, towards Tiruvannamalai. The scheduled time of departure of the train was 11-45. But it was already 12 o'clock, but the train had not arrived. He purchased the ticket paying two rupees and 13 annas. The train was going past Madurai. In a little while, a moulvi talked to Ramana and enquired where he was going. Ramana replied — "Tiruvannamalai'. The moulvi told that he too was going there only and they need to change the train at Villupuram. The train reached Villupuram at 3.00 a.m. Ramana got down there and started off in search of way to Arunachala. He covered about ten miles by night. He was too tired to step further, due to hunger and thirst. He got some Prasad, thanks to the generosity of the drum beaters at the temple. Holding the Prasad, he was coming out of the temple but fainted and fell down. Somebody gathered there made him drink some water. He woke up, ate the Prasad fallen down and he got deep asleep.

Next day, it was 31st August, Gokulashtami. One Shri Muttukrishna Bhagavatar took him to his house and served him food. Then Ramana took out the golden earrings he had and kept as a pledge at Krishna Bhagavatar, who obliged him with some money and told that anytime he may take back the ear ring, on repayment of the money. Bhagavatar's wife lovingly gave him a food-packet. Ramana took the packet, and tore of the receipt of the pledge. He reached straight Tiruvannamalai and reached the temple. On September 1st, he submitted himself saying - '0 Father I have come to your refuge'. Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni has described the incident beautifully as - 'As if jumping from Mother's lap of Madurai to the Father's lap'. He surrendered himself totally, with all that was his, including pain, pleasure, honour and insult, and melted away in the bliss of the Self beyond the veil of mind.

With the feeling of being completely disentangled from the bondage of the world, as the child of Shiva, he was coming out of the temple. Some unknown old person asked "My child, you want to give your hair"? and took him to the barber

and got his shaving done. Ramana went to the Ayyana Kulam pond and threw away the sacred thread and the food packet. Just wore a loin cloth which he made out of his dhoti, relieved of everything before he was about to take a dip in the pond, it started raining heavily.

When the mind is full of filth

Will it suffice, if body is washed?

When mind is bereft of all blemish

Will the filth the body trouble within?

As the mother bathes the baby

The Cosmic mother is washing my body

Shorn of everything I stand here still,

In the Real Awareness. What is mine? but Nil.

All the chain of events were happening accidentally, without any expectation. The mother Nature bathed him. He came back to the temple in the chill morning, nothing except the loin-cloth to cover his body, but as if the body itself is not he, and with mind completely divested of all worries and pains, even sensation of heat and cold. The first four months after he came he did not take bath even. He was sitting in some corner of the temple, or on the side of the road wherever he found a vacant spot of shelter, being oblivious of the body and the external world, totally resigned to the silence within.

While he was absorbed in meditation, in the compound of the 'Sahasra-Mantap' of Arunachaleshwara temple, some mischievous boys took pleasure in troubling him in various bad ways - they were throwing stones, cow dung etc., on him, but Ramana remained aloof, and never reacted to any such acts. To avoid the mischievous trouble, searching a solitary spot, he found and went, a dark cave, called Patala Linga. The cave of the Mantapa was low lying, damp and full of ants and insects and he sat there. The bite of the insects caused wounds so much that blood and puss was oozing out. But the mischievous boys found him out and started giving trouble there also. Seeing this, a gentleman called Venkatachalapati, could not tolerate the torture given to Ramana, and drove the

impertinent boys. With the help of a Sädhu, he lifted Ramana from there and brought to the court yard in front of Subrahmanya Swamy temple and made him sit there. But Ramana was not aware of anything, and was lost in meditation. Then, at that time, a pious person called Muniswamy took care of him, for some time. Thereafter, Ramana used to go to 'Aralivana' and sit in meditation and also near the temple-car shed. At the time of Kartikotsava in the month of November-December there was a huge gathering of people. One Shri Uddandi Nayanar, a devotee, who attended the Kartika celebration took notice of the supreme detachment (renunciation) of Ramana and engaged himself in service of him. But the mischievous boys troubled him, when Nayanar was away. Ramana was aloof of all this.

Then Nayanar and Tambiran of Annamalai lifted Ramana and took him to Gurumurtam temple and served him with great devotion and compassion. Ramana was without bath for so many days. His hair was matted and nails had grown. His hands had become so much benumbed that he could not even lift them. One had to feed him just like a child. Again he used get absorbed in Samadhi. One day when Tambiran came with oil etc., to give him a bath; Knowing this, Ramana wrote with a charcoal piece on the wall in tamil - 'What service this body needs is some food, that is all'. Then it was known that he was a Tamilian and educated. Venkatram Iyer, a clerk of the taluka office came every day and tried to extract some information about the prior life of Ramana but he could not. Then, he resorted to fasting in his presence. Moved with mercy for him, boy Ramana, wrote on the wall — 'Venkataramana Tirucculi'.

52.First Message

That day, when Venkataramana left home, his brother, uncle and relatives searched for him everywhere, but without getting clue, they left it, disappointed. Alagamma's sorrow for having missed the son knew no bounds. In the meantime, uncle Subbaiah passed away. A person who came from Tirucculi to Madurai to attend the final rites of Subbaiah, it was informed that Venkataramana was in Tiruvannamalai. Then, uncle Nelliappan came there and requested Ramana in every way, to return home. But Ramana did not respond to it and remained silent. Mother Algammal with eldest son Nagaswamy came there. Ramana was, at that

time in a temple on the small hill Pavalakunru. Seeing the son who was sitting, devoid of body-awareness, her sorrow crossed its bounds. She wailed and moaned, holding him by neck, and beseeched him to come home. Seeing her plight somebody told Ramana — ‘The mother is crying so much. At least tell her yes or no. If you do not want to talk, at least write it on this paper’ — and gave him paper and pencil. Ramana without any emotional disturbance wrote on the paper — ‘All pervading creator of the world, makes everyone to play his/her past karma. What is ordained cannot be effaced by any effort. What is destined to happen will happen without fail. That is certain. So the best way is to keep quiet’. This is the first message of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.

Ramana had not taken bath for the first four months after coming to Tiruvannamalai. At that time, the wife of a devotee by name Ponnaswamy was coming to the temple. She was seeing a small boy with matted hair, without bath, with body emaciated without nurturing, deeply lost in meditation. Her motherly heart was moved with compassion. One day she brought soap-nut powder, water and pulled the boy to the outer edge of the courtyard. It was unexpected to Ramana. But as an expert mother mending her child with affection but stern handling she gave him a bath. In this same way, when he was in Gurumurtam, a pious lady, Meenakshi gave bath to boy Ramana. In this way, right from the young age, with firm resolve, without succumbing to any infatuation, Ramana became his own Guru and Guide, and through severe Tapas attained the state of Blissful Self-Realisation.

53.Meeting with Shri Ramana Maharshi

Having left Madras, Daivarãta, with an intense craving to see Bhagavan Shri Ramana Maharshi, reached Arunachala and went straight to Skandashram. Shri Maharshi was sitting on a stone-seat, in blissful state of Sahaja Samãdhi, oblivious of the external world. There was a divine effulgence in his half-opened eyes. Seeing him, he felt he is seeing the incarnate form of Sahaja-Realisation. He was overwhelmed and got himself lost, seeing the compassionate eyes of Shri Ramana. His inner being was awakened by the contact of Shri Ramana’s sight, and words of adoration flowed effortlessly from his mouth.

श्रीमत्पाराशरोऽयं प्रमुदितवदनः पावनः पार्वतीयः ।
प्रत्यग् दृग् देवकल्पो विगतभवभयः सर्वदा सुप्रसन्नः ॥
आत्मन्येव प्रलीनः सकलगुणनिधिर्मौनमुद्रोपपन्नो ।
दृष्टः सन्तृप्तचित्तो रमणमुनिरहो सच्चिदानन्दलीनः ॥१॥

यं दृष्ट्वैवावशिष्टं भवति पुनरहो नेह कर्तव्यतायां ।
सद्यश्चित्तप्रसादाद्विगलति मनसः सर्वसंकल्पजालम् ॥
वृत्तिः शामृत्यनेकाविधिमनुजनिता द्वेषिणो वा निषेधात् ।
सन्तं पाराशरं तं गुरुरमणयतिं सन्ततं चिन्तयामि ॥२॥

येनेयं चित्रसृष्टिर्बहिरिव मनसा स्वप्नवत् संप्रदृष्टा ।
दृष्टिः प्रत्यग्गताऽपि प्रणतभयहरी संविमृष्टा दयार्द्राः ॥
स्वार्थाः संगस्य हानात् तदनुगधियः सर्वतः सन्निरस्ताः ।
त्रातस्तेनेह मर्त्यो रमणभगवता धन्यतां याति सद्यः ॥३॥

यस्मै तत्त्वार्थवेत्रे परमपदविदे स्वात्मनो बोधयित्रे ।
स्वानन्दस्यापयित्रे जनिमरणभयात् प्राणिनस्त्राणयित्रे ॥
स्वात्मानं प्राप्यबुद्ध्या शरणमुपगता धन्यता यान्ति लोकाः ।
तस्मै पाराशरायों रमणभगवते ज्ञानधात्रे नमस्ते ॥४॥

यस्मात् संपूर्णकामात् विगतकलिमलात् दिव्यवागात्मदेहान् ।
नित्यं प्रद्योतमानाज्जगति हि तपसा संस्थितप्रज्ञतोऽन्यः ॥
संतप्तानां प्रजानां विषयविषधरैर्नैव कश्चिच्छरण्यः ।
तस्मात् पाराशरान्मे रमण मुनिवरादात्मनः संविदस्तु ॥५॥

यस्याहं मे मतिर्हि स्वयमिह गलिता संविदेवावशिष्टा ।
धर्माधर्मप्रपञ्चः सह विधिभिरहो संप्रशांतो निषेध्यैः ॥
इष्टानिष्टे समाने स्थितिरपि जगति प्राणिनां वा हितार्था ।
तस्येदं पादयुग्मं रमणभगवतः संप्रपद्ये शरण्यम् ॥६॥

यस्मिन्त्वाश्रमस्थे ह्यभयमुपगते वीतवर्णप्रपञ्चे ।
ब्रह्मिष्ठे नित्यतृप्ते परमरसनिधौ सिद्धयोऽष्टौ प्रणम्राः ॥
कामाश्च प्राप्तकामाः सुखमिह परमं संविशंतीव नित्यं ।
तस्मिन् पाराशरे मे रमणमुनिवरे धीन्द्रियाण्यारमंताम् ॥७॥

स्वामिन् सर्वार्तिहारिन् नय परमगुरो निर्मल ज्ञानमूर्ते ।
वासिष्ठस्य प्रासादात् तव चरणयुगं प्राप्य सर्वैर्दुरापम् ॥
पूर्णाःकामा इहेति प्रणहित मनसा धन्यतां भावयन्तं ।
त्राहीमां पापजालाद् रमणमुनिपते दैवरातं प्रपन्नम् ॥८॥

रमणं रमणीयचिद्विकासं शरणं संस्मरणीयसद्विलासम् ।
परमं परमार्थतत्त्वबोधं कलये कल्मषकीलनप्रबोधम् ॥

Daivarãta, soon after, wrote down the stanzas that flashed to him and titled it as 'Shri Ramana Vibhaktyastaka', (since beginning of each stanza was in the declination (Vibhakti) form in order.

In the divine presence of Shri Ramana, Daivarãta experienced inexpressible bliss and got absorbed in it. One day he submitted some queries to Ramana and obtained his replies of his Self-Experience.

Their dialogue contains in it the essence of the sublimity of human life. It is included in the third chapter of 'Shri Ramana Gita'.

54.The Main Duties of Man

दैवरातस्य संवादं आचार्य रमणस्य च ।
निबध्नीमस्तृतीयोऽस्मिन् अध्याये विदुषां मुदे ॥१॥
In this third chapter we are opening up the dialogue that took place between Daivaräta and Acharya Ramana.

Daivarata said (Q-1)

किं कर्तव्यं मनुष्यस्य प्रधानमिह संस्मृतौ ।
एतं निर्धार्य भगवान् तन्मे व्याख्यातुमर्हति ॥२॥
What is the prime duty of man, which he has to do in this world? Bhagavan, please decide it and explain to me.

Bhagavan said (A-1)

स्वस्य स्वरूपं विज्ञेयं प्रधानं महदिच्छता ।
प्रतिष्ठा यत्र सर्वेषा फलानामुतकर्मणाम् ॥३॥

One who is aspiring for the highest (ultimate) good, has to realise his true form. All the actions we do and their fruit are rooted in it only.

Daivarata said (Q-2)

स्वस्य स्वरूप विज्ञाने साधनं किं समासतः ।
सिद्ध्येत् केन प्रयत्नेन प्रत्यग् दृष्टिर्महीयसी ॥४॥

What is the easiest means to realise one's (true) own form? By what effort can we accomplish the vision of the inner Self?

Bhagavan said (A-2)

विषयेभ्यः परावृत्य वृत्तीः सर्वाः प्रयत्नतः ।
विमर्शे केवलं तिष्ठेत् अचले निरुपाधिके ॥५॥

We have to withdraw all the thoughts from the objects, with effort. Then we have to inquire into that which is attribute-less and steady (unmoving).

Daivarãta said: (Q-3)

यावत् सिद्धिर्भवेत् नृणां योगस्य मुनिकुञ्जर ।
तावन्तं नियमाः कालं किं यत्नमुपकुर्वते ॥६॥

Oh, highest among Munis, will the efforts be helpful upto the attainment of Yoga Siddhi (self-realisation)? i.e., Should the 'niyamas' (canons) - Shaucha (purity), Santosha (contentment), Tapas (penance), Swadhyaya (study of scriptures/sacred books) be pursued up to the stage of self-realisation?

Bhagavan said (A-3)

प्रयत्नमुपकुर्वन्ति नियमा युञ्जतां सताम् ।
सिद्धानां कृतकृत्यानां गलन्ति नियमास्वयम् ॥७॥

The ‘niyamas’ support (help) the honest efforts of the aspirants. He who attains the vision of the Self and thus accomplished what is supposed to be attained, the Niyamas will fall off on their own. i.e., they are not affected by the canons.

Daivarãta said: (Q-4)

केवलेन विमर्शेन स्थिरेण निरुपाधिना ।
यथासिद्धिः तथा मन्त्रैर्जपैः सिद्धिर्भवेन्न वा ॥८॥

Is it not possible to attain what is attained by pure, steady, inquiry, bereft of any attachment with objects, through repetition of Mantras?

Bhagavan said (A-5)

अचञ्चलेन मनसा मन्त्रैः जप्तैः निरन्तरम् ।
सिद्धिः स्यात् श्रद्धधानानां जप्तेन प्रणवेन वा ॥९॥

Those who have faith attain it through repetition of the mantras or repetition of Pranava (Omkar), when done with steady mind.

वृत्तिर्जपेन मन्त्राणां शुद्धस्य प्रणवेन वा ।
विषयेभ्यः परावृत्ता स्वस्वरूपात्मिका भवेत् ॥१०॥

By repetition of Mantras or Pranava, the ‘vrttis’ of the mind recede from the sense objects and get merged in our true form.

This dialogue took place on 7th July 1917. Daivarata asked the questions in Kannada and Ramana answered in Tamil. Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni put in writing in Sanskrit, and incorporated in the ‘Ramana Gitã’ as the third chapter. Ramana Gita consists of eighteen chapters which contains Ramana’s replies to the questions put of Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, Vishãlakshi Amma, Daivarãta and others.

The last chapter is an adoration (stuti) done by Ganapati Muni, addressed to Ramana.

Daivarata was just twenty five years old, when he had this dialogue with Shri Ramana. Yet it serves as a useful guide to those who have a spiritual bent of mind. While Daivarata, in this way, was engaged in search of the experience of the Self, Ganapati Muni and Vishalakshamma, with children arrived there. Then Daivarata showed Ganapati Muni 'Shri Ramana Vibhaktyashtaka' expressed through him. Seeing it, Ganapati Muni appreciated very much and said that it has come out, in depicting the form of Ramana's personality, in a much better way than those composed by himself.

55.The sublime vision of the Ideal of Rishi

'The source from which the power of the soul emanates is the original sense of 'I' or 'self'. It is the real duty of man to realise its true form. It is in itself natural Tapas — "This is elucidated by Bhagavan Shri Ramana Maharshi. He used to enter into the deep Samadhi, at will, being completely oblivious of the external world. To Him 'Tapas' was a natural process. That is how he attained Self-realisation in the shortest time, even when he was very young.

It was the 'Chaturmasya' period, in 1915. While in sublime condition of Samadhi, the light of the highest Arsha-spiritual knowledge flowed from his mouth, in the form of this stanza

हृदय कुहर मध्ये केवलं ब्रह्ममात्रम् ।
ह्यहमहमिति सक्षादात्मरूपेण भाति ॥
हृदि विश मनसा स्वं चिन्वता मज्जता वा ।
पवन चलनरोधादात्मनिष्ठो भवत्वम् ॥
In the cave of the heart Brahman alone is shining, in the form of 'Sãkshi' as 'Atman', 'I'. By inquiring deep into the source of 'I', or by exploring the source of the spirit within, or by the means of regulation of breath (Pranayama) you enter within and get established in the 'Self'.

Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni has called it 'Ramanopanishad' or 'Hardopanishad'. This elucidates fully regarding Self-realisation in very clear terms beyond any doubt.

56.Circumambulation of Arunagiri

The time Daivarata spent at the feet of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi was invaluable. Then Daivarata was only of the age of twenty five. Bhagavan was giving instructions, giving hints for his future spiritual life and guiding him. It was indeed a great luck that Daivarãta had the opportunity of being with his Guru Vasistha Ganapati Muni and his Parama Guru Shri Ramana Maharshi.

It was the full moon day of Vaishakha. Daivarãta was prostrating before Shri Ramana Maharshi. Ramana asked Daivarãta — 'Have you circumambulated the Arunagiri'? And, it was a special thing that Ramana also made a circumambulated himself, so as to motivate Daivarãta. He said — 'Here, this hill itself is the Deity. The Arunachaleshwara Linga, down below in the village in the temple is representing this Hill, which is God manifest in this form'. Daivarata submitted — 'If you are desirous of doing a circumambulation, I will be blessed to do it in your guidance. Ramana happily agreed.

So, everybody got ready having taken their refreshments before the night fall. As the full moon was rising, Daivarata and some of the disciples accompanied Shri Ramana and came down the hill from Skandashrama, to the flat land at the foot of Hill. Daivarata had a desire traverse the way, singing Bhajans and dancing. But the landscape being undulated he satisfied himself by just singing Bhajans.

After singing -

शिवहर शङ्कर गौरीशम्
वन्दे गङ्गाधरमीशम् ॥
'Shivahara Shankara Gaurisham,

Vande Gangadharmesham',

He started Rudra Bhajana of his own composition

भगवन् भर्ग समग्रविभूते । भावित भद्रद रुद्र नमस्ते ॥
And added with it the Veda mantras, such as

त्रातारमिन्द्रं अवितारमिन्द्रं हवे हवे सुहवम् शूरमिन्द्रम् ॥

Apart from these, he sang Marathi and Hindi Bhajans as a child of nature, in the divine presence of Arunachaleshwara, Daivarãta created a divine atmosphere. When they came down the hill and reached the bottom, the path further was quite wide and neat. The path round the hill is of about eight miles. On the northern side of the Temple of Tiruvannamalai, at a height, up the hill, there is a place called Adi-Annamalai. There is a Shiva Linga there. Ramana Maharshi and the disciples reached there, by the time of dawn. Having come to know that Ramana Maharshi was also circumambulating the Hill, quite a number of devotees had already assembled there, and waiting for him. They submitted to Ramana - 'You have left Skandashram yesterday evening and have come by foot all the way till morning and hence tired. We pray, you make a stay till afternoon take some rest and then proceed'. Ramana was kind to agree to their request. Soon arrangement of food for all was made. After taking meals at about noon, they took rest for about an hour and they bade farewell to the devotees assembled there, and then started off again, with bhajans and dancing on the way. TraveRishing about two miles, they reached a place called Pacchamma, where they had the darshan of the Deity (Devi) there. Ramana told, that about four years ago he had, along with Vasistha Ganapati Muni performed Tapas there. They, later came slowly, and reached SkandAshrama by evening.

57.Daivarãta at the feet of Guru and Paramaguru

Every day Daivarata went to Tiruvannamalai, brought milk to Skandashrama, and prepared coffee and served Maharshi, Ganapati Muni and Vishalakshamma, before he took coffee. He used to say 'Indraya Swaha' while giving to Maharshi, 'Brahmanaspataye Swäha' while giving to Ganapati Muni and 'Saraswatyai Swaha' while giving to Vishalakshamma and offering it as Havis.

Alagammal, the mother of Ramana had come and stayed in Skandashram even before Daivarata arrived there. She was very orthodox and used to cook her food herself. When Alagamma got to know Daivarata, his polite conduct and spirit of service, pious thoughts, he got the opportunity of doing her service also. Daivarata everyday prepared the food of her liking.

Even though he was living at the feet of his Guru and Paramaguru and was preparing food for them, he used to fulfill his minimum requirement by collecting

Madhukari only. He used to go to Agrahara of Tiruvannamalai, about 2 miles away and collect Madhukari. He used to offer a portion of it to Maharshi, saying 'Indraya Swaha', which Maharshi accepted happily. In those days Daivarata had given up spices and salt. He was not accepting even Madhukari of such preparations. When he was to eat his food, sitting near the water-source, Maharshi used to send him buttermilk without salt.

Spiritual discourses used to take place in the vast inner courtyard of Tiruvaiiamalai Temple. As association, 'Ramanananda Nilaya' was started by the local people and they were running the programmes. Daivarata missed no opportunity of attending them.

When Daivarata learnt that Ramana Maharshi had performed Tapas at the Virupaksha-cave, he too wanted to visit it. At that time Ganapati Muni thought of doing Tapas in that cave, and expressed his intention to Daivarãta. Daivarata, got ready to be at his service. Ganapati Muni and Vishalakshamma stayed there for a month, engaged in Tapas.

A short while after Ganapati Muni's Tapas of one month was completed and he returned to Skandarsham, Vishalakshamma suffered ailment of the womb. Because of (his Daivaräta had to go to Chennai, Ganapati Muni sent her, with Daivaräta to his disciple Doraiswami, for her treatment. On the return journey, Daivarta visited Shivakañchi and Visnukañchi.

There was a Sama-Veda Pãtha-shãlã in Shivakañchi. The teacher there, was a good scholar. Daivarãta stayed there with the intention of learning Sãma-Veda for a week. But since it was imperative to go to Ganapati Muni, it was not possible to stay there longer. From there, he went to Vishnukanchi and had a sacred bath in Chakra Tirtha. After finishing his daily ablutions, when he went for Madhukari, the women folk closed the doors, seeing him adorning Bhasma (sacred ash). So he came back to Chakratirtha and fasted. In the afternoon nearing sunset, some Pandits started coming one by one for walk, and were sitting engaged in scriptural-discussions. Seeing a stranger sitting there, the enquired and came to know that he belonged Advaita-tradition. So they came forward to debate with him. Daivarata quoted द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ॥ (RiRigveda 1-164-20) as the authentic reference, and proved that there is no factual difference or opposition in Advaita-Dvaita and Vishishtadvaita. They were pleased.

Daivarãta came to Shivakañchi and then reached Skandãshram. In a fortnight Vishalãkshamma also was cured of the ailment and returned to Ganapati Muni. At that time Ganapati Muni had decided to go to the seat of Renukä (at Padaveti) and obtaining the permission from Shri Ramana, he went to Padaveti together with Vishãlãkshamma and Daivarata, who was his companion-in-Tapas and disciple.

58.Rich Environment of Vedic (Arsha) times

The environment around Padaveti was very beautiful. The landscape was all green around a river was flowing in the forest, with its fertile banks and agricultural fields. In every way it was as though representing ancient, quiet Arsha environment of Vedic times.

Five miles away from Padaveti, towards Tiruvannamalai, there is a small village called 'Chandavashil'. Here Ganapati Muni, Vishalakshamma and Daivarata first visited Renukamba Temple. They were all blissful as if a child in the lap of the mother. There was a small Dharmashala in front of Renukamba Temple. There were nobody residing nearby. The priest of the temple was residing away, who was visiting the temple in the morning, at noon and in the evening. Nobody visited the place in- between. It was a secluded locality, and was a place fit for performing Tapas.

It was the first day of bright fortnight of Sharannavaratri, (in the month Ashina). All the three, after bath, before dawn, sat in the Renukamba Temple for meditation, one near a pillar each. Ganapati Muni was repeating 'Pancha Bijakshari Renuka Mantra', Vishalakshamma was doing Nira-Saraswati Mantra of three bijäksharas (root syllables) and Daivarata was meditating on the Veda-mantra — "Jatavedase sunavãma somamarãtiyato nidahati vedaha".

At about ten o'clock Daivarata got up and went to Dharmashala and started cooking. At 12 noon they used to take simple, spice less food consisting of cereals, rice, milk and curds.

59.Rishi Life

Time was repeating itself. Their Rishi like life was uninterruptedly running silently. Three austere souls were interested in Tapas, with the aspiration of natural self-realisation. Daivarata's mental frame was getting prepared of the descent of awareness, as a result of his continuous sublime life. Nine days of Sharannavaratri were past, and 10th day was beginning. It was the time when Ganapati Muni was diving deep into the meditation. His solitary absorption was disturbed when an unacquainted voice was heard. He opened his eyes and saw, that the voice was coming from the mouth of Daivarãta, and he was surprised. Why Daivarata, who used to sit in silent meditation daily, is uttering mantras today! The words were emanating from a deep latent flow of consciousness. The words reverberating in a low tone were not easily graspable. While observing it keenly, the flow of words slowed down and gradually stopped. But Ganapati Muni, being confident that next day also he was going to witness the repetition of the occurrence, was ready with writing materials. Exactly as he anticipated next day also, at the same time words started emanating from Daivarata's mouth. Ganapati Muni was quick in taking down as the words came. But since the flow of words was very swift and tone was very low, it was not possible to take down all in full. Leaving out such incomplete portions, he started compiling those which were taken down in full.

In the evening when he was keenly examining the words which had taken down, he found that those words were Vedic words and the order of the words was fitting in Vedic metres (Chandas). They resembled the very same language, tone, and the same deities. It led him to a conclusion that certainly they were new Vedic Mantras. It is said — 'Anantä vai Vedah' — the Vedas are endless. It was a clear evidence before his eyes that the Rishi of the present age also can have the revelation of the Vedic Mantras. Just as the ancient Rishis could, in the deep condition of meditation and an elevated level of consciousness.

Two days after Daivarãta started getting the revelation of Mantras, Ganapati Muni was able to grasp the words more carefully and take them down. Like this the vision of the mantras occurring to Daivaräta continued for sixteen days. After having collected them all, Vãsistha Ganapati Muni compiled them in Rks into Suktas and the Suktãs into Anuvãkãs. Then he began writing a commentary on them under the title "Vasistanvaya Bhashya". Mainly he did the compilation of the Suktäs based on the Principle of deities. During the sixteen

days the number of Rks obtained was four hundred and fifty. These Rks were in four metres, viz, Gayatri, Anustup, Triup and Jagati. This work comprising eight Anuvakãs, forty eight Suktas and four hundred fifty Mantras, was titled by Ganapati Muni as '**Chando Darshana**'.

60.Manifestion of Chhando Darshana

This is a statement of Ganapati Muni, straight from his heart. Elaborating every topic in it, he has given satisfactory answers to all the possible doubts that may arise in it. In his introduction (to the commentary) he has given full explanation regarding the validity of the Revelation of Chandodarshana to Daivarata, Profile of Daivarata, and the details of how exactly the Revelation occurred. He has put them in a simple way in his own elegant Sanskrit.

"Among my disciples, Daivarata engaged himself in yoga right from his age of sixteen. He came together with me Arunachala to have the Darshan of Shri Ramana Maharshi. Seeing the Blissful Sahaja Samadhi condition of Shri Ramana Maharshi, he developed an intense yearning to attain the same condition. At that time, with unmatched Gurubhakti (devotion to one's Guru) he accompanied me to the 'Renukamba Kshetra' at Padaveti village. Daivarata, my wife Vishalakshi and I commenced our Tapas on the 9th day of Sharannavaratri of Shalivahana Shaka 1839 (1917 C.E.).

From his mouth, who was absorbed in deep Samadhi state during Daivarata's Tapas, words started emanating. On observing for two days, it came to be known that they are Rigveda-mantras. 'This Chandodarshana' which came from Daivarata's mouth was identified, heard and collected by me, it is being published as it is. As the wise saying goes, 'A good word from even a child's mouth should be respected'. With my affection for my disciple, and as per the words of the wise, and with the background of revering the Arsha-vision, I myself, at that time, have written this 'Vasishtanvaya Bhashya".

"The speciality here is that, even though Daivaräta was as young as the age of twenty five and also not well-versed in Sanskrit language, he having engaged himself in intense Tapas and practice of Yoga, realised the revelations of Chando Darshana, which was impossible for others. These mantras are on par with the

well-known Rigveda-mantras, in their Chandas (metres), tone (swaras), vocabulary, meaning and philosophical vision embedded in them. If one discerns with the view of Scriptures, it will be known. The knowledgeable people with pure heart and wisdom (proper discrimination) will clearly recognise this.

Daivarãta has been a Tapasvi, a Yogi and knower of Spiritual essence, and also a seer of Vedamantra. With his Tapas, knowledge, pious conduct, and humility good conduct, I am of the view, that he is eligible to attain the epithet, 'BrahmaRishi' which was enjoyed by the ancient seers. This is my heartfelt opinion". - In this way Ganapati Muni, has expressed his affection for his disciple and his heart-felt feelings.

This extra ordinary fortune of attaining the vision of this New Arsha-darshana occurred to Daivarata, from morning up to ten o'clock every day, commencing from the day of Vijayadashami of Sharannavaratri, for sixteen days continuously.

Ganapati Muni, started compiling and writing commentary, from the early days of beginning of the occurrence of Mantra Darshana to Daivarãta, starting from the full-moon day of Kartika-month, Shãlivahana Shaka 1839, Ganapati Muni continued writing the commentary till the full moon day of Magha and completed it.

As he was writing the commentary at the presence of Renukamba all the three persons had to stay there till it got completed. They had come there, with a preparation of only one month stay. Now it was necessary to make new arrangement of provisions, milk etc., for the extension of their stay.

A few persons quite influenced by the Rishi-couple Ganapati Muni and their disciple Daivarata, came forward to make necessary arrangement of provisions for their continued stay. They arranged a cow, with its calf for milk. With this, there was some change in the routine activities of Daivarata. He regularly got up early in the morning, cleaned the court area, washed it with cow-dung, then putting rangoli, cleaned the cow-shed and milked the cow. Thereafter he took bath and prepared coffee for Ganapati Muni couple. Afternoon he took the cow for grazing and brought a bundle of grass and brought back the cow. Thus, service of cow, which was favourite to Daivarata also got included in his daily activities.

Vishãlãkshamma felt about the strict disciplined life of Daivarata and his utmost care to see that there should be no lacuna in his duties and activities. She felt she should help him. One day, after midday meals, Daivarata took the cow for grazing. Before he came back carrying a bundle of grass, she washed all the utensils and kept them neatly.

When Daivarãta saw this, he felt as though some great mistake has been done by him or there is great lacuna in discharging his duty. The shock he felt at his (supposed) gross dereliction, made him think — 'what is the propriety of his being a disciple, while getting work done by his Guru-mãta?' He picked up his Kamandala and deer-skin, and started off. Observing the unusual depressed countenance of Daivarãta and his going out without telling them, she called Ganapati Muni and told him. Ganapati Muni immediately rushed, leaving the job at hand and approached Daivarata. He asked — 'What has happened? Why do you want to leave us?' Daivarata humbly submitted, that he could not be with them while allowing or making Amma to do the household work. But Ganapati Muni, asked him to go to her and tell her. When Daivarãta came and told Amma what he felt, she pacified him and asked him to forget it and promised that she would not do any job of household, hereafter.

Daivarata's was of single-minded devotion, and his intention was to serve them in every way. The bond between them and Daivarãta was so deep, sincere and unassuming. Such was the unmatched serfdom with which he served his Guru.

While Ganapati Muni was writing the commentary on Chandodarshana, during leisure hours, he used go with Daivarata to see the places around Padaveti. It was told (by the local people) that, the area was once under the rule of a king by name Nandaraja. In the middle of that area there was a small river, by the side of which there were ruins of thousands of houses, and a few dilapidated temples. The whole area was surrounded by high hills.

Ganapati Muni and Daivarata were very sorry to see the two temples, one of which was Someshwara temple and other was of Ardhanarishwara. Though trees like Ashwatha and banian tree had grown on them, the roofs of the temples were in good condition, it was difficult to go inside since the entrances were blocked by thick trees and thickets. When Ganapati Muni asked the farmers

nearby, they cut the trees and thickets and made entry possible. When Ganapati Muni entered inside, he was astonished see that the inside hall was very vast, consisting hundreds of pillars. But the way to the sanctum sanctorum was dark. They inched their way groping to the sanctum sanctorum and were welcomed by bats on all sides, and nauseating smell. Daivarata moved forward, feeling by hand to touch the idol, and suddenly fell in a pit, about 6 feet deep. Somehow he crawled up and examined, to find a Shivalinga. Some people covetous of finding burned fortune had spoiled it. Seeing all this Ganapati Muni was much aggrieved and returned to their Dharmashala.

Even in such a solitary place like Padaveti, the nearby people, scholars from quite distant places, educated people, started coming now and then to meet Ganapati Muni. Some people who were close by would stay one or two days. Among them was one, by name Ishwar Swamy. He was very humorous person, and was making fun of even Ganapati Muni, to whom he was very dear. Whenever he came, he used to help Daivaräta in cooking and was liked by him much.

61.Child-like sublime Personality

One day at lunch time Ishwar Swamy told Daivarata - 'See! I shall show you a fun today.' Daivaräta had by then spread the leaves for lunch. Ganapati Muni couple sat for taking lunch, and Ishwar Swamy also by their side. After 'tovve' (dal), as the second dish curry was served. Ishwar Swamy added some water to it while eating. Seeing it, Ganapati Muni also added water to it. At this sight, Vishalakshamma somehow controlled her laughing with difficulty and ate quietly.

Normally Ganapati Muni never bothered about the taste of what is served. He used to eat, quietly, not even being conscious of the dishes served and in such occasions Daivarata had to show him and remind him pointing to the different dishes, like condiment, vegetable preparation etc. Next day, Ishwar Swamy joined Daivarata while cooking. Daivaräta said - 'See! I shall also show you a great fun!' He planned to prepare curry with 'Soorana' tubers, which Ganapati Muni was not normally liking. So he made big pieces, after removing the skin and cooked them separately and decanted the water. Then he pounded the pieces to smooth pulp and added to the curry. So that nobody could know that it was prepared with

Soorana tuber. All liked it. lshwar Swamy asked for more curry instead of buttermilk at the end. Seeing him prefer curry to buttermilk, Ganapati Muni asked Daivarãta - 'Ishwar Swamy took another serving of curry instead of butter milk. What shall I do'? Daivarata replied 'Whatever you like'. Then Ganapati Muni also preferred the curry to buttermilk. After the meals, they were strolling in the veranda. Ishwar Swamy said — 'Today, what curry did Daivarata prepared I don't know. I am feeling itching on my lips on tongue.' Ganapati Muni was always afraid of the itching caused due to Soorana-tuber. He went and asked Daivarãta — 'What, is it curry of Soorana-tuber you prepared?' 'Why so!' asked Daivaräta. 'Ishwar Swamy is telling he got itching on lips.' Daivarãta said - 'Is it so! Let him have itching, leave it. If you get itching, please tell me. Some curry is left out in the vessel. You may see yourself any pieces of soorana-tuber are there. Amma and I also have eaten the same thing. We have not felt any itching.' He showed the vessel to Ganapati Muni, who felt with fingers and found none. And he had to keep quiet.

After sometime Ishwar Swamy told — "I did not fed any itching. Ganapati Muni's mind is as innocent as that of a child. As much a great man of knowledge and scholar he is, so much innocent and gullible also. I did so only to show it. It is a great luck to get a Guru as he. It was Daivarata's luck which graced him in the form of such a Guru.

It was the death-anniversary of the father of Ganapati Muni, in the month of Margashira. But, he used to tell, whenever the occasion demanded, that there is no observance of Shrãddha karma in the Arsha tradition. Yet he was not opposed to the observance. He was observing the Shraddha of his parents, in remembrance and gratitude to the parents, in a very simple way, all eating together. It was not a Shraddha in the traditional way, by offering rice- balls (pinda) to the manes. It was by way of respectfully remembering the departed, with devotion and feeling of gratitude, and offering the food with a sense of dedication.

Ganapati Muni informed Daivarata what cooking preparations to be done, next day. It included usual preparation and in addition poori, pãyasam and another sweet dish. That day a little after midnight Ganapati Muni was awakened due to the sounds of vessels in the kitchen. Daivarata was already keeping ready,

the things required for cooking, measuring the quantity of each item and keeping them neatly in the respective vessels. Daivarata's forethought and competence were much appreciated and it was much to the satisfaction of Ganapati Muni.

The commentary on 'Chandodarshana' was completed before Mahashivaratri. Living in the twentieth century two great souls, Guru Vasishtha Ganapati Muni and disciple Daivarata, both cherishing the dream of Arsha (vedic) way of life laid it uncovered in their own life.

In the Arsha (vedic) age there were no irrelevant concepts of caste, seat and creeds prevalent in the modern day religion. They considered earth, water, air, sky - all as divine. They saw divinity in every animate and inanimate thing. The only tradition which has no caste, creed and religion is that of Vedic Arsha culture alone. 'Hindu Dharma' is the name given by the British.

Unlike the exponents and propounders different faiths, the Rishis have not advocated that one should abandon wife, children and all in order to attain enlightenment or self-realisation. Thousands of Arsha couples, in their life in tune with the natural law of Nature, in their harmonious family life, engaged themselves in their Tapas perfectly and attained enlightenment, and became the seers of the Vedamantras. Such male seer persons were called 'Brahmarishi' and female seers were called 'Brahmavadinis'. There is no religion, or creed that has looked upon, on women with such respect and reverence as the Arsha -culture did.

The pure messages of that time started fading away step by step after the period of Rigveda and came under the spell of kings and monarchs in the Puranic times. The Yajnas and Yagas also got glorified with pomp and extravaganza, with killing of animals for sacrifice and wastage of life-nurturing materials in the fire. The different sects such as Buddhism which arose in those times, seeing the observances and conducts of the priestly class then in vogue, despised the original Vedic tradition without grasping the true principles. Observances and conducts may change. The attitude of the people may change. The forest may turn into inhabited kingdoms and vice-versa. But not a single letter of the revelations of the Arsha (Vedic) Darshanas can change. The basic principles of Rishi-culture cannot lose its purity and perfection whatever one might say. Vasistha Ganapati Muni thus elucidated threadbare the principles of the times of

Rishis to Daivarata, now and then as per the demand of situations and made him a Rishi, a BrahmaRishi.

Is it not this, which is the ideal relation and bond between a Guru and a disciple! - A unique and sublime relation! The famous scholar and journalist P.V. Acharya exclaims like this in one of his writings -

"The grace of the Divine is strange. It makes the disciple a 'seer of Mantra' (Mantra Drashtara) and makes Guru the commentator."

Even before Vasistha Ganapati Muni came to Padaveti, the marriage of his son Mahadeva was proposed. Thereafter, the auspicious moment of marriage was fixed, on the 8th day of bright fortnight of Chaitra, in the Kalayukta Sathvatsara. Ganapati Muni sent Daivarãta to Chandäsil, for sending this information by post, to the parents of the girl. Daivaräta, accordingly despatched the letter and returned to Padaveti.

Days rolled on one by one in Phalguna month and the day of Daivarata's parting was drawing nearer and nearer. One or two days prior to leaving the 'Renuka-Kshetra' all the three were sitting in the country-yard. At that time Ganapati Muni spoke his heart to Daivarata, because Ganapati Muni couple also were to leave for Parvatipur in Andhra Pradesh and Daivarãta was to leave for Gokarna.

The Guru-couple were loving Daivaräta just like their own son; and hence was the keenness and intensity of the pain of their parting was pricking them.

It was a heart-melting situation. Ganapati Muni told him — "You did not learn any 'vidya' (subject) from me, did not expect any reward from me, May God grace you with knowledge and wisdom, as a reward to your unblemished, sincere service you did. I am not able to repay the debt of your service, in my life-time. If you get married, I shall be born as your son and repay the debt." Ganapati Muni was brimming with tears and so was Vishalakshamma, who repeated same words and expressed the feelings of her heart. Hearing the words of Guru-couple Daivarata could not utter anything, he stood dumb. He could hardly contain the love, affection and confidence they reposed on him. Composing himself in a few minutes he said - 'I have not done your service with the intention of getting knowledge from you, or learning any vidya or for money, or any other expectation

of any reward. It was my yearning to do your service, and so I did. I pray to God, may He grace me so that I may get a Guru like you and a Parama Guru like Ramana in every birth.' Daivarata submitted so, in utmost humility. It was a situation unforgettable in his life.

Spirit of service without any expectation in return was inborn to Daivarata. He knew melting away, getting absorbed in diligent service, forgetting everything, without an iota of hankering after things which normally a person would desire for. He was deriving celestial happiness in the service of Guru. It is this only, which became the source of light for his heart.

As decided earlier, all the three went to Chandasil from Padaveti and then to the nearest railway station. The pain of separation filled their hearts when the train arrived at the station. A short while after bidding them farewell Daivarata took another train and reached Tiruvannamalai. Further he went to Skandashram and spent three days in the presence of Shri Ramana and submitted to him the matter of revelation of Mantras in Renuka Mandir in Padaveti. Thereafter he took permission of Shri Ramana and via Mangalore reached Gokarna.

62.Back to the shade of the Birth place

Daivarãta, after reached Gokarna stayed in the small yard of Varadeshwara Temple where he stayed in his childhood. He was always thinking of Arsha (Vedic) life and Vedic principles, and now started thinking of his further goal. The resolve which he had made, at the time of his doing Tapas at Siddhapur came to his mind in consonance with his present line of thought. His ambition was to establish an Ashram to impart education of the type of Arsha-Rishikula system. While in Padaveti, he had submitted to Vasishtha Ganapati Muni - 'I have made a resolve to establish an Ashram in the Rishikula system to impart Vedic education. I pray, you become the Kulapati (Chancellor) of that Ashram'. Ganapati Muni had told him - 'All over this Bhärata schools should come up to impart knowledge by creating awareness of living naturally in the lap of Nature and teach such a way of life. Your aim is commendable. May your endeavour attain success' - and had blessed him.

The establishment of Ashram should be made in Gokarna. If not possible, it should be in a suitable place in Karnataka, in silent area in the midst of Nature. From the primary stage itself, the children of villages should be taught writing and reading, and also to be imparted knowledge, of agriculture and animal husbandry. In addition they should get knowledge of primary herbal treatment and yoga. These were the thoughts ringing in the mind of Daivarãta. Knowing his thoughts, their family priest, Dattatreya Upadhyaya told him — "On the banks of Sharävati there is an excellent place. Your ancestors lived there, Ruins of a Yajna-shãlä built with bricks, a dais can be seen even today. It is, now also, called 'Yajña-shãlã' only. It is three miles away from the famous Jog-falls. In the, upper land, there are about two hundred acres of paddy fields." He gave these details. Inspired by this, Daivarata went there, together with Idagunji Gajanana Sabhähit. Rich with vegetation, the place was indeed a suitable place to build an Ashram. But it was informed by the local people that that area is going to be inundated because of the hydro-electric project. Hence, the idea had to be given up. Thereafter they went to a place called Bärangi, which was still more elevated area. But when it was known that, the area is also under danger area, they returned to Gokarna.

63.Ashokavana - a place of celestial beauty

One day, Daivarata in search of a suitable place for establishing the Ashram, passing through Bhimakunda path, reached Ashokavana. It was full of lush green vegetation all around. With ponds and brooks, it was an environment full of divine peace. With the hind music of chirping birds. The Rajapurohit Jayaram Bhat Sapre, seeing this enchanting environment only, with the help and support of local people, had built a temple here for Lord Mallikarjuna. The place was found to be an ideal spot for an Ashram in every way. Therefore, having done Tapas at that spot for one month, Daivarata formally took a resolve to establish an Ashram here. It was on the day Akshaya Tritiya, Siddharthi Samvatsara, Shalivahana Shaka 1841 (1919 CE).

Anyway, the Ashokavana was chosen for bringing up an Ashram. It was a very nice place for doing Tapas though, but it was not a convenient place for students to come there and go back home. Single narrow path leading to that place with ups and down-hill stretches, full of thorny shrubs and thickets was

about two and a half miles long and difficult to traverse daily. So, Daivarata thought it would be proper to find a suitable place nearer to Gokarna. Temporarily he shelved the idea of Ashram construction of Ashokavana, and came to Bhimakunda Upavana and started doing Tapas. Having noticed this, the farmers residing nearby, belonging to Halakki community built a kutir for Daivarãta, at a little distance away from Bhimakunda.

Bhimakunda Upavana is in a low lying flat area between hills. On one side there is pond called Bhimakunda, which waters gardens below. And, on the upper part of the Bhimakunda Tirtha, there is an ancient idol of Janardhana. On the southern side of the idol there is a flat area, with a low compound built with murre-stone. Edging it are flowering trees like Champaka, Surahonna, Naga-champaka etc. In the western side below was a garden of coconut, arecanut and banana trees.

64.Adopts Family Life

By that time, already, the effulgence of the divine personality of Daivarata was spreading slowly in Gokarna. Hence, some students started coming to him for learning the practice of Yoga and the Veda. Amongst them one by name Balaji earned special affection of Daivaräta and became his main disciple. His name was Bälakrishna and Daivarãta was calling him with love as Baläji. And then came to auspicious time for Daivarata to enter into family life. Venkataramana and Savitri couple of Jambhe family, together with Parameshwari the elder sister of Savitri who was closely known to Daivaräta, approched one day and expressed their wish that Daivarãta should enter family life, marrying their daughter. Thinking that it is the right time for taking up family life Daivarata respected their wish and conveyed his consent. But he said that the marriage should be performed in accordance with the Arsha-culture (Vedic-culture). Venkataramana couple agreed to it and the auspicious moment (muhurta) of marriage was decided, that day itself.

The arrangement for the simple marriage was made. Invitation was sent to Vighneshwara Bhat, the father of Daivaräta, the family priest Dattatreya Upadhyaya and Krishna Bhat Mayyar who was Rigveda Guru of Daivarata. All assembled on the auspicious occasion.

The Ashwattha tree, with wide spread branches, was the pendal; the raised platform around the trunk of the tree was the 'Mantap'. The member of Hãlakki community decorated the marriage-pedestal with flowers and foliage.

Daivarãta prostrated before his father Vighneshwara Bhat, Krishna Bhat Mayyar and family priest Dattatreya Upadhyaya and took them to the pendal and requested - "My marriage be done according to the simple way enjoined in Ashwalãyana Grihya Sutras, according the pure Vedic procedure, leaving aside presently prevalent local and social tradition". The priest agreed and assured that it will be in that way. Guru Krishna Bhat Mayyar recited two verses — 'Nadashabdamayi Ghanti...' in place of orchestra normally played in auspicious occasions.

The engagement was performed at 6 o'clock in the morning and on the same day at noon the marriage ceremony was done. It was an ideal practical display of simple and natural way of life.

Daivarãta ascribed the new name 'Shraddhã Devi' to the bride, in place of her earlier name Varamahälaksmi. The 'Vadhu-pravesha' (bride entering her husband's house for the first time) was conducted in the Kutir, constructed for tapas. After taking up family life, every day they performed Agni-upasana every day.

65.Ashram-construction near the sea-shore

In the same year in which Daivarãta began his family life at Bhimakunda Upavana, a suitable site was selected at a little distance from sea-shore of Gokarna, and the construction of the Ashram was started. In the midst of vast area of the garden of Mango, Neem, Punnaga, Ashwatha, Coconut trees, the Ashram was constructed, facing east. A hail where about sixty students can study was prepared with seating arrangements attached to the walls on all four sides. There was a gymnasium also. At about 30 feet away a well, bathrooms, kitchen, Yajna-shala and cow-sheds were constructed.

Daivarata couple shifted from Bhimakunda to the Ashram at sea-shore. Only four-five students used to come to Bhimakunda. Here, about twenty students started coming in the beginning itself. In four-five months many people

started visiting the Ashram to observe the activities of the Ashram which was running in line with Rishi-kula method. As the fame of the Ashram spread wide, not only children but people aged 30-60 also started coming to the Ashram to learn Yoga, Veda etc.

The students were feeding on Madhukari. But the path on the sea-shore was very hot in the midday. Daivaräta arranged earth to be spread along the path and lawn-grass was grown on it, so that walking with bare-foot could be comfortable. Most of the people used to walk bare-footed in those days.

66. Arsheya (Vedic) Education

The sea on one side and the green vegetation on the other side, and in between the long stretch of the sandy sea-shore. Here the Ashram of Daivaräta's dream was physically materialised. His motto was this only "Education should run under the shade of natural green surroundings. Education is not just literacy. Man will be learning from his birth till death. The education should be such as to inculcate the awareness and feeling of harmony and a feeling that all the living beings are one family, in line with the ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. Everyone should become competent to produce food for himself and should have the basic training of independence. He who despises agriculture has no moral right to eat the food produced by the agriculturist. It is the duty of everyone to grow food, without entertaining any sense of inferiority. It is everyone's duty. Such an attitude should be developed".

67. Shraddhã Devi

It is not an easy task for an uneducated girl in her teens to shoulder the responsibility of an educational institution. Shraddhä Devi managed the responsibility of treating the guests coming to the Ashram, welfare of the students, taking care of the cows and agriculture etc.

Smt. Shraddhã Devi was born in 1911, as the daughter of Smt. Savitri and Venkataramana Jambhe, in Gokarna. Her name given by the parent was Varamahãlakshmi. Married to Daivaräta at the age of eight, she grew up at the

Ashram only. Since she was too young, (8 years) at the time of marriage, her mother's elder sister Parameshwari who was a widow came together with her children to the Ashram and stayed there.

Shraddhã Devi's was an austere life, involving Japa, Tapas and other observances. She was doing Agni Upasana every day in addition to it, household work, looking after the cow-shed, agriculture, all together made her life incessantly packed, without any leisure. She loved pets, such as cats and dogs. She tended four dogs and two cats. She always fed them, before she herself took her food. Tending the cows was her favourite job. She fed them grass, provided water, allowed the calves to be suckled, milked the cows — all she did lovingly and punctually. She treated them with herbal medicines, whenever they suffered cold, or infection of hoofs and mouth. That was her speciality.

For morning breakfast and night supper rice-gruel was provided to all. Shraddhã Devi prepared it, served all students with milk, curds and purified butter according to their liking. Every student came in on hearing her ringing of bell, helped serving each other water, salt, pickles etc., and they washed their plates themselves, as was the rule at the Ashram.

The students called her lovingly Akka or Shraddhakka. She was 'Abbheru' or 'Ammanoru' for all Halakki farmers. Their families who resided in the vicinity, were taking milk, buttermilk, coconut etc. Shraddhã Devi always helped them in their needs and she was extremely generous. She believed that the happiness derived by giving is much superior to that by receiving. The residents of the surroundings also, venerated her and were ready to help her, at her beck and call at any time of the day and night.

Agriculture and husbandry are inseparably linked and it was necessary to teach both together. So, Daivaräta started an education centre for agriculture and animal husbandry, at Ashokavana. On the days of 'anadhyayana' (holidays), since there were no Veda-study classes, practical training was imparted regarding the agriculture- work depending on the season. Daivarãta himself used to plough the field, and giving practical training. Every student was necessarily taught the methods of maintenance of fields, gardens, forest and meadows.

68.Open cow-shed

There were separate Go-Shãläs in Ashokavana — one for the cows that have yielded calves, and another for the other cows, oxen, calves. It was in the open area. No cattle was tied to the peg. All the cattle used to come to the Goshalã in the evening and gates were closed and they were set free in the morning for grazing. There was a small shallow pond for them to drink water. Ashokavana was full of mango trees. It was a common sight to see the cows under shade of the mango trees. It was Daivarata's intention that the cows should be free.

अक्षैर्मादीव्यः कृषिमित् कृष स्व ।
वित्ते रमस्व बहुमन्यमानः ॥ (ऋग्वेद ५.३४-१३)
'Do not live by cowries (money). Do agriculture, live by the wealth you have generated'. This was often quoted by Daivarãta whenever he happened to talk about agriculture.

The education which does not teach how to live is no education at all. That by which we can live in a natural way, is the real education - that is indeed life-education. He taught and advocated the method of education comprising 'Seven Canons' (Sapta Maryada) — which is conducive and supportive of evolution of humane personality in human life. 'Sapta Maryada Sadvidya' is the pinacle of education which transforms the animal-man into a divine-man.

69.Sapta Maryada Sadvidyã (7 canons of true education)

1. Food: The food should be sattvik, without any involvement of violence at any stage. It should be moderate without much salt, sour or pungent spices. No food which would disturb or agitate mind and body should be taken. For evolution of humane personality, with compassion, mercy and love, food is also a main cause.

2. Movement (Vihara): This includes all the activities that contribute to evolve and keep mind and body in a happy condition. One should engage oneself in such activities, such as strolling in the calm and cool atmosphere of the morning and evening.

3. Conduct (Achara): Having devotion to the Divine, which is the cosmic Consciousness throbbing in all the beings and keeping the mind away of hatred, treachery, falsehood, attachment etc., by exercising self-control and maintain the heart and mind pure and lucid. At least once in a day, doing meditation in silence, with absorption. Respecting parents and elders. Having pure love for brothers and sisters. To see divinity in all the life-nurturing and live saving elements, vegetable, food grains, fruits and parts of nature. Such sublime attitude and conduct lead man from triviality towards sublimity.

4. Vichãra (way of thinking, wisdom): It involves wisdom and discrimination in everything concerned with life; and awareness of what is good and what is bad. Keen observation and subtle perception of facts of life.

5. Ucchãra (Expression): It is expressing the thoughts and feelings. Even chirping and singing of birds is also expression only, sounds of music can contribute to development of mind. In the same way our tone and words should never be harsh. The life should be turned into a devotional song, a music.

6. Prachãra (Interaction and association): Man is a social being. The whole humanity is a family. Life can be turned to be happy heaven through cooperation. Some people understand life easily, but some need to be educated, and instructed. Parents should instruct and improve children, so should do the teachers to their students. Keeping overall good of all, to spread what as good and auspicious is Prachära.

7. Säkshãtkãra (Realisation): Searching and exploring is a natural tendency. We need to know ourselves before knowing the external world. There lies a hidden power within our own mind and it is the real Guru, which is the cause of all awareness of all beings. We attain real knowledge by realising this power in us. We come to grasp the truth of things we meditate upon, with absorption.

By understanding these Sapta-Maryadas, we come to realise the ideal life.

70.Fasting on water and Severe tapas for a month

Daivarãta was the devotee of Shri Vãsudevananda Tembe Swamy. He felt desire that he should write a book on the Vedic-Dattatreya principle. He decided

to go to Ganagapura, the divine presence of Dattatreya, on the banks of Bhima-river and do austerities for one month and observe fasting. This sacred place is in the Afzalpur Taluk of Gulbarga District. There is a Datta mandir. It faces the East. In this temple there is no idol of Dattatreya or even the 'Padukãs'. There is only a seat (Pitha), which is called 'Nirguna Pitha', commonly called as 'Datta Pitha'. This is a symbol of 'Nirgunopasanä'.

From the eighth day of the dark fortnight of Magha month in 1929, Vibhava Samvatsara, one month prior to his fasting vow, Daivaräta started taking rice with milk, curds and ghee, and stopped it on the seventh day (saptami) of Phalguna, bright fortnight. From next day (Astami) onwards, taking only water, he began Tapas. His body was emaciated due to a month of fasting. He became so weak that he found it hard even to walk without support. After completing one month he started taking fruit juice little by little for four days and then fruit juice and milk for seven days and further taking rice little by little in the increasing order and adjusted to the normal food intake. What decreasing order is followed before beginning the fast, the same should be reversed, i.e., in increasing order after the fasting. This is the scientific method to be followed. If it is neglected it may cause harm, even there is possibility of death. Excessive fatigue might cause excessive hunger and one may tend to eat more. One needs to be careful and keep balance.

While Daivaräta was doing Tapas at the banks of Bhima, his Guru Vasistha Ganapati Muni came to Gokarna, from Arunachala. They came to Daivarta's Ashram, on the sea shore, and were heartily welcomed by Shraddhä Devi. Ganapati Muni was very happy in the atmosphere of Rishi-life maintained there, the roaring sea on one side and the vedic chanting on the other side. She was already acquainted with the affection and intimacy of Ganapati Muni when she was in Arunächala. She informed them regarding Daivaräta's doing Tapas at the Dattatreya temple on the banks of Bhimä, abandoning food; Ganapati Muni grew anxious. He was loving Daivarãta very much. He wrote letter next day morning itself. The letter uncovers before us the mutual love between Guru and disciple and their ideal bond of oneness.

71.Vãsistha Ganapati Muni's letter

Phalguna, Shukla 8

18-3-1929

Dear son, Daivarãta

I have come to Gokarna. I learnt that you are doing severe Tapas, at the banks of Bhimã. I was very happy. May your inborn power, the awareness carried over from many births, your faith in the ancient Rishi-tradition increase your zeal for Tapas. I shall be in this area for about three months. Actually my heart is anxious to meeting, but I am not inclined to call back here, since you are engaged in the severe Tapas. You are very dear to me. But what is more dear to me is your Tapas. Let not my visit to Gokarna cause any disturbance whatsoever in your Tapas. This is my love full order. But I expect a reply soon. If your Tapas is not going to be disturbed by coming once to Gokarna, my heart happily welcomes you. In case it is going to be a disturbance, (I say) certainly do not retract from your Tapas. While going from here, I shall first see you and thereafter only go to Ramanãshram. Some intimate persons here are intending to retain me here only. If their intention is fulfilled, our meeting will be here only. Shraddhä, Somashrava and your dear cows are all well.

Wishing growth in your Tapas

Vãsitha Ganapati

72.Another letter of Ganapati Muni on receiving Reply from Daivarãta

Chaitra, Shukla Saptami,

Tuesday

Dear son, Daivarãta

I received your letter, you who are engaged in severe Tapas. Noted the contents. I can only suggest this much - Tapas, without food is not for a yogi that you are. When whole Brãhmin community has suffered a state of decadence, (when the effulgence of Rishi-personality is lost) only persons like you are the beacon of light for the future. Mind is beset with impediments that are troubling, as over looming darkness and Tapas is affected by them. Still, the light of Tapas does shine at all times. Let all good happen through Tapas.

Difficulties do come, it is natural. The fever is cured by the treatment administered by Seetäram. The disturbance of eye is also gone. But herpis has raised its head. This ailment also may vanish soon. Indra is there to protect. May your Tapas be perfectly completed. May all wishes be fulfilled.

Always wishing you well

Vasishtha

As soon as Daivarata recouped his physical strength, after the severe fasting, he came to Gokarna from Ganagapur. Since Ganapati Muni was already in the seashore Ashram, he straight went there and prostrated to his Guru and enquired his well-being. Thereafter he narrated his experience of one month fasting and penance. Ganapati Muni was greatly pleased at the successful completion of his vow.

73.Original Yajurveda Samhitä

The revision of Krishna Yajurveda, division of Samhita, Brahmana and Aranyaka and with these, editing of original Yajurveda Samhita — This is a marvellous achievement of Daivaräta.

It was a long cherished aspiration that the existing Krishna Yajurveda is haphazardly arranged and it should be revised in an appropriate manner. Therefore, he raised this point with his Yajurveda Guru, Mahäbaleshwar Bhat, Gayatri, Subrahmany Bhat Chitrige and other scholars. Daivaräta's view was that Brahmana and Aranyakas in the Krishna-Yajurveda are mixed and they need to be separated rectified. Having heard his opinion the other scholars argued that the Puranic anecdote referred in the 'Samskãra Ratna Mälã' is the authentic basis. Daivaräta did not agree with this view and by taking the authenticity of Baudhayana, Apastamba and Hiranyakeshi Grihya-Sutras, he justified his view and said that the Puranc anecdote mentioned in 'Samskara Ratna Mãlä' is not the valid basis.

Even though all had come to the awareness of what the truth is, nobody was ready to accept Daivarata's opinion. Mahabaleshwar Bhat, hence, made a caustic remark saying — 'Having learnt Yajurveda from me you are telling me so!' But Daivarata made a balanced reply with cool mind — 'I am not questioning the erudition of anyone of you. Because I respect you so much I have come to seek your cooperation, through which I aspire to complete the task'. The other Yajurveda pandits felt that the method which they had been following so far is losing its value or validity. So they discussed among themselves and decided to take matter to Vasistha Ganapati Muni. They came to Daivarata's Ashram and

discussed the matter of revision of Yajurveda. Ganapati Muni listened to the arguments of both sides and expressed his opinion, that, the arrangement of existing Yajurveda is defective and unsystematic and it is proper to compile it in its original form systematically. Having realised the fact, the Pandits extended their unanimous consent to the revision of Yajurveda Samhita.

Thereafter, Daivarata, with the cooperation of Yajurveda scholars of Gokarna, taking Baudhayana Apastamba and Hiranykeshi Grihya Sutras as the basis, separated the Samhita-suktas which were (earlier) incorporated in Brahmanas and Aranyakas, placed them in right place, titled it as '**Mula Yajurveda Samhita**'. This comprises five Kanas viz. Prajãpatya, Soumya, Agneya, Vaishvadeva and Swayambhuva. This book was later published in 1973 by Benares Hindu University.

Daivarata had, already written a book titled '**Veda Vedikã**' which comprised detailed introduction to the Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads. In it he had discussed the differences between Vedamantras and Brahmana, Aranyaka and Upanishads, and he had expressed his own opinion. Having seen this book, Pandit S.V. Satvalekar published it together with his Krishna Yajurveda, at Pãradi of Maharashtra in 1957. But Daivarata wanted to publish it as a preamble to his 'Mula Yajurveda Samhita'. But it did not come about.

It is the Puranic belief that Vedavyasa made divisions of the Veda. But it is not true. There is no mention of Vyasa in the list of those who have been in the Shakhas referred to in all the four Vedas, namely, Shakala, Kanva, Madhyandina, Taittiriya, Maitrayaniya, Ranayaniya, Kauthumiya and Jaiminiya. Even if it is to be accepted that Vyasa divided the Vedas (into four), he should considered to have existed even before the time of Brahmana, Aranyaka and Upanishads. The revelations (manifestation) of the mantras have not occurred in a period of only one century; they were occurring over a period of thousands of years and were preserved separately in oral traditions of each Shaka of those Rishi-lineages. Therefore it would be childish to say that Vyasa divided the Vedas. In this way Daivarata had a deep insight and he used to examine keenly and express his opinions.

74.Simple Life, with knowledge of Agriculture

Soon after the rainy season, the paddy crops got ripened and cutting was over, the farmers of the sea-shore used to prepare the fields for growing vegetables, without wasting even an inch of land, that was their speciality. The paddy field was quite near and it was the place of getting practical experience of the primary lessons in agriculture for the students. Shraddha Devi herself was growing variety of vegetables. They were watered in the early morning, by drawing water from the small ponds made here and there under the thatched supports erected for water-gourd, snake-gourd etc. Nobody taught agriculture to anybody here. The youngers used to observe the elders and acquiring practical knowledge.

During holidays, Daivarata used to teach the processes of Hatha Yoga such as Asana, Navali, Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Prãnayäma, to the students, according each one, interest and eligibility. They used to practise them in the morning and evenings. There was a gymnasium outside the Ashram at a corner. Many young people used to come and do exercises for stubborn body building.

Krishna Bhat Mayyar, who was Veda-teacher of Daivarata had great affection for him. He was bringing his children Yajnadatta and Hari Bhatta and the students of the Veda-pätha Shala which he was running, to Daivarata Ashram. He himself taught the Rigveda to all in the Ashram.

One day a Sanskrit Pandit talked very lightly of Shri Krishna Bhat saying that he knew only veda-chanting but he does not have the knowledge of Sanskrit language, and the knowledge of the Veda. Hearing this Krishna Bhat, who was very soft and sentimental could not avoid his tears. When Daivaräta came to know it, he pacified him and decided to please him. The same day evening the Pandits and Veda lovers gathered in the Dharmashãla area, of Shri Mahabaleshwara Temple. He seated Shri Krishna Bhat in the chair and talked about the sublime character of Shri Krishna Bhat. He said - “The Veda-vidya is still alive and it is because of such persons (as Shri Krishna Bhat) who have been teaching the Veda without any expectation, any return, to all those students who approached him. Not all those who know Sanskrit have the knowledge of the Veda, or the meaning of the Veda. Rigveda, one of the four, itself is comprised in ten Mandalas, and it is not possible for all to learn it by heart. To learn it by heart fully, without any mistake of swara or varna, requires an enormous mental

capacity and memory. Therefore it is our duty to pay respect to him". In that meeting he reverentially honoured Shri Krishna Bhat; and with this Sri Krishna Bhat was relieved of the sense of insult and pain he suffered.

Krishna Bhat Mayyar was very dear to all the students. The manner in which he chanted the Veda Mantras in a clear and mettifluous voice was indeed soothing to the ears. Just as Shri Krishna Bhat, two more veda scholars, Shri Narayan Narasimha Joshi and Mahãbaleshwar, Annappa Bhatt Hire were also teaching the veda, in the Ashram. Because of this, the life of Tapas and travels of Daivarãta could run smoothly.

75.Daivarãta-couple in the divine presence of Shri Ramana Maharshi

About four years had elapsed after Daivarãta took up family life. He had a yearning to go to Arunachala, together with his wife Shraddhã Devi and seek blessing of Shri Ramana Maharshi. So, he went to Arunachala with her and paid salutations to the feet of Ramana and got his blessings. It was a coincidence that Vasistha Ganapati Muni-couple also had arrived there at the same time. So they got the opportunity of being at the presence of Guru and Parama Guru. They stayed there for about two months and after obtaining the permission of Ramana, returned to Gokarna.

While Daivarata-couple were leading their life in the sea-shore Ashram, in the course of time they got three male children, namely Somashrava, Satyashrava and Devashrava and four daughters, Medhä Devi, Shachi Devi, Prajna Devi and Bhärati. In the meantime the activities of the Ashram, writing and travels over the country were all running together.

Daivarata, though he respected good traditions, never yielded to blind orthodox customs. He is one who raised his voice strongly against the exploitation of women. When the orthodox people opposed to the right of women to pursue vedic study, he vehemently refuted it, and justified it with authority and scriptural basis and dubbed the opposition as the height of ignorance. There were women who were seers of Mantras in the Rigvedic times, such as Godha, Ghoshä, Vishwãvärã etc. All these had realised the Veda through Tapas, and had the divine vision. They were called Brahmavadinis. When that is the case it is simply childish

to say that women should not Chant the Vedic mantras - he declared. Moreover he gave vedic education to his daughters and made the history of Arsha-age repeat itself, with the introduction of Vedic study for women.

76.Women Vedic Seers - 3

In the period of Rigveda and Upanishads, there were (women Vedic seers) on par with Vedic Rishis. As is listed in 'Sarvanukrama Sutra' of Katyayana it is as follows

"अहमष्टौ वागाम्भृण्यात्मा नं तुष्टाव" - R.V. (10, 125, 1-8)

"उदसौषट् पौलोमीशच्यात्मानं तुष्टाव" - R.V. (10, 149, 1-6)

"श्रद्धया श्रद्धा कामायनी श्राद्धमानुष्टुभम्" - R.V. (10, 151, 1-5)
"अयं गौ सार्पराज्ञी आत्म देवतम्" - R.V. (10, 189, 1-3)
All these Brahmavadinis are referred to in the 'Paribhasha Sukta' -

गोधा घोषा विश्ववाराऽपलोपनिशन् निषत् ।
ब्रह्मजाया जुहूर्नामा अगस्तस्यस्वसादिति ॥
इन्द्राणीचेन्द्रमाता च सरमा रोमशोर्वशी ।
लोपमुद्रा च नद्यश्च यमिनारी च शश्वती ॥
श्रीर्लाक्षासार्पराज्ञी वाक् श्रद्धामेधा च दक्षिणा ।
रात्री सूर्या च सावित्री ब्रह्मवादिन्य ईरिता ॥
- Rigveda Paribhasha Sutra

Ours is a culture in which women enjoyed equal respect and status with men, even as long ago as three thousand years, which is not to be found in any other culture of the world. But, at the later Upanishadic period, i.e., from Yajnavalkya's time itself, relegation of women began and the high values of the Arshi (Vedic) culture started fading out.

77.Dedication of 'Nandini Mudrana' to Ganapati Muni

Seth Maghanlal's devotion to Daivarata was unmatched. With humble beginning as the trader of copper vessels, he rose to great height by the blessings of Daivarata, and became a big trader. Maghanlal had promised financial help for bringing up the Ashram in line with the Vedic education system, which he had

expressed at Arabaleshwar, at the concluding day of his pancha gavya vow, in 1914. Accordingly when Maghanlal learnt that Daivarãta was proposing to construct the Ashram in 1920, he immediately extended his financial help for purchase of land. Later, 1926, when he learnt that Daivarata was thinking of setting up a printing press for publishing Ganapati Muni's works, he purchased for him a very good printing machine in Bombay. Daivarãta dedicated it to Guru Ganapti Muni. It was named as, 'Nandini Mudranalaya'. With this facility 'Umãsahasra' and other works of Ganapati Muni were printed and published.

78.Daivarãta's stay in Nepal

The wheel of time rotates relegating the old things to the background and opening up and displaying newer ones. That is the law of Nature. People began to be attracted more towards the modern education, who is after all ready to undergo hardships, subjecting themselves to strict discipline and self-dedication to the method of moulding human personality in the pattern of the course conceived by the Rishis, when easy and materially more attractive vistas are opened up? Accordingly the number of students coming to the Ashram dwindled day by day and finally it stopped. Then the mind of Daivarãta naturally turned towards wandering over the country. Visiting a few pilgrimage centres he reached Mumbai. He remembered Maghanlal who was always a devout and service minded, noble person.

In Siddhapur, when Daivarata was performing Tapas at Arabaleshwar, Shri Lal had provided all possible help and made it convenient for Daivarata's stay there. He had helped also for purchase of land for the Ashram and also for setting up the printing press. Remembering him, Daivarata went to his house.

Maghanlal heartily celebrated the arrival of Daivarãta and accoarded all hospitality with devotion. At that time Bhogendraraj Pandit, the son of the Royal priest of Nepal, who was also an acquaintance of Maghanlal, visited there. He was overwhelmed with devotion and happiness when he saw Daivarata. He, with loving insistence, requested Daivarata to visit Nepal. When Bhogendraraj was suffering from kidney ailment, which did not subside with any medicine and allopathic treatment, he had got it cured with the yoga and Ayurveda treatment given by Daivarata and also got progeny, which was denied earlier. Since then he

had a longing to invite Daivarata to Nepal, and accord him his cordial hospitality. Now the opportune moment had come. Daivarata accepted his invitation and in 1944, in the bright fortnight of Ashwina month he went to Nepal with him.

Bhogendraraj couple felt blessed at the arrival of Daivarata. They treated him with all reverence and devotion. While staying with them, Daivarata wished to do Tapas in Nepal, and expressed it to Bhogendraraj, who according to his wish made convenient arrangement by setting up a Kutir, near a peepal tree in a calm atmosphere. As if the time had come for it to happen and nature too would cooperate with it, a Nepali couple who were staying at a little distance away from the spot of the Kutir, came forward to provide their service to Daivarata. They were managing cleaning the Kutir daily and supply fruit and milk etc. to him.

Daivarata visited Pashupathinath Temple, accompanying Bhogendraraj. He closely observed the idol and the method of worship conducted there. Then he felt an inspiration that he should study the real form of Pashupathinath as per the scriptures and its Vedic-principles and write a book. So, he took permission from Nepal government and undertook a detailed study. In the meantime, whenever he got time, visited places with some speciality and studied them from historical view.

The idol of Pashupati has five faces and each face is called by different name.

1. Eastern Face: This is called tat-purusha (Mahadev)

2. Western Face: This is described as ‘Sadyojata’. Sadyojata means infant form.

3. Southern Face: This is named ‘Aghora’. This represents Kalapurusa, directing the creation and dissolution.

4. Northern Face: This is called ‘Vamadeva’. This is a mingled form of Prakrti and Purusha and is in Ardhanãrishwara form.

5. Upward (Ordhwa) Face: This is in Linga form at the crest portion of the four faces. This is represented by name Ishana.

There is a custom of writing Shri Yantra with white sand paste on the crest of the head of the fifth face. Here the Shiva Linga represents Purusha and Shri Yantra represents ‘Stree’ and indicates equality of Prakrti-Purusha. Daivarata

wrote a book titled ‘Pashupati Hrudayam’ comprising all the Vedic-principles, in systematic way, in both Hindi and Nepali. Shri BalaKrishna Shamsher, the president of Nepali Bhasha Prachär Samiti, himself wrote the preface to the book and published it on, Bhädra 12, Samvat 2002 (according to Nepali Calendar). Shri Juddha Shamsher, the then Prime Minister of Nepal, released it on the auspicious day of celebration in memory of coronation.

At a small distance in the Eastern direction from Pashupati Näth Temple, river Vangmati is flowing. There is a sacred place on its bank in the forest where a ‘fountain’ is springing from a small aperture on a smooth stone. This is the abode of Guhyeshwari. The speciality of this place is that there no idol or Linga of Guhyeshwari, or any temple. This is symbolic of Nirgunopasana, and such places are very rare. Daivaräta, who had already seen some places of Nirgunopasana, was surprised to see one such place in Nepal also.

Daivarata, daily, early morning, used to go to the pond at a little distance from his Kutir and take bath. One day it was very cold. He entered into the pond as usual. His limbs got benumbed and he could not move his hands and legs. Luckily, a Goorkha, who was watching this at distance rushed in and pulled Daivaräta out of the pond. He made fire with dry leaves and twigs and warmed his body, Daivarãta realised that he needs to be cautious in course of time.

Only a few days were left, before the time of departure from Nepal. Shri Juddha Shamsher Mahãrãj, the premier of Nepal invited Daivarãta to his house and extended hospitality duly. Thus developed a bond between Daivarãta and Juddhadev and continued intimately. Apart from his help in publishing ‘Pashupati Hrdayam’ of Daivarata, he extended his financial help for the development of Daivarãta’s Ashram also.

79.Daivarãta became Pashu-vaidya at Pashupatinãth’s place

Rajapurohita Bhogendraraj Pandit, hosted Daivarãta a week before he was to leave Nepal and treated him. At that time, one day, a cow in his Goshalä was struggling a lot with difficulty in giving birth to a calf. Daivaräta came to know of it. Immediately he rushed to the cow-shed. He found that the calf was with its face in reverse direction and hence was the difficulty. The cow was big and the

calf also had grown more than the natural size. Daivaräta, immediately pushed the calf back into the womb and then held the front legs of the calf and tied a rope to them. Then pulled the calf out with the help of servants. With this emergency action both the cow and the calf were saved. Seeing this Bhogendraraj and members of his family were dumbfounded. Daivarata was not only a Rishi, but a physician and veterinary vaidya also.

Daivaräta never in his life looked down upon anything. Whatever be the job at hand he did it diligently, with sense that it is sacred. He was full of compassion, to all, including children, patients, forlorn, maimed, old people - whosoever they be, he extended every possible help.

Daivarata imparted knowledge of yoga, study of the Veda and agriculture to his daughters also just as he did to his sons. While they were studying in this way, he performed the marriage of his eldest daughter Medhãdevi. The son Somashrava also had come of age. So he thought of arranging for his marriage also. One day while he was on his way to Ashokavana via Gokarna, a quiet girl caught his attention, near Ganapati Temple. When enquired, he came to know that she was the daughter of Appu Bhatta Shankarlinga- couple.

Laksmi, the daughter of Appu Bhatta Shankarlinga was very amicable to all in the vicinity. With her pious beauty, conduct and ever active enthusiasm, she was of very helpful nature. No wonder, such a girl made an impression on the mind of Daivarata.

When Daivarãta, made his intention known to Appu Bhat, he readily agreed to give her daughter in marriage to Somashrava. In a few days, the marriage of Lakshmi and Somashrava was performed in vedic procedure, in a simple manner.

The name of the heroine of the novel of Ganapati Muni was Purna. It was a character depicted as an Arsha-girl of innocent by nature, as though a reflection of nature. She strives to maintain her pious (sãttvic) personality, amidst the human instinctive weaknesses, and aspirations of her womanhood, interspersed with hopes and disappointments. Daivarata liked this character. So he named his daughter-in-law as ‘Purna’. Chandra has another name ‘Soma’ also. Since Purna joined him now Soma has become Purna- chandra (Full-moon) while accepting, daughter-in-law into the house for the first time Daivarãta uttered this with heartfelt feelings.

When Purna came to her husband's house, she was eighteen. Sister-in-law Prajna became very intimate to her. Purna cooperated with everyone, and saw that all the household work and Agnihotra etc. ran in time smoothly.

In a year, she gave birth to a male child. Daivarata was very happy and named the child as 'Vedashrava'. Veda means knowledge 'Shrava' means 'listen'. But this happy association of mother and child did not last long. She suffered some undiagnosed ailment. She stayed at mother's place. Her condition worsened every day. One day she told her mother — "I will not see the sunrise of day after tomorrow. Afterwards handover this child to my in-laws. For any reason or for the sake of affection you should not keep this child here". Pürna breathed her last in 1954. It was Ashädha-Dwãdashi (12th day of dark fortnight), at 3.30 a.m.

The demise of dear daughter-in-law was difficult to bear. Daivaräta remained at the Ashram, detached from everything. But on the insistence of Nagaveni (the daughter of his brother seetaram) he agreed to the second marriage of Somashrava. Nagaveni took the lead in arranging this marriage; she thought it would alleviate the sorrow that beset the family. After Somashrava's second marriage, Daivarata went again, to places. Shraddha Devi herself looked after the child. Somehow she did not feel like staying in the sea-shore Ashram. In 1955, (Magh Shukla first day) she left the Ashram and went to Ashokavana, leaving behind Somashrava couple there.

80.Austere Life of Shraddha Devi at Ashokavana

At the Ashokavana Ashram, being engaged in service of cows, agriculture and household responsibilities, Shraddha Devi's austere life was strewn with difficulties and hardships. Her needs were very simple. Her appearance would remind one of the way a Brahmavadin of ancient times would look like. She had unique qualities. After entering husband's house she never went, in subsequent days to any relatives or acquaintances. Once she came from the sea-shore Ashram, to Ashokavana she stayed there till the last breath.

Shraddha devi was very skilled and dexterous in managing all the household affairs. She was heating milk in an iron pan, which perhaps nobody

could know that is made of iron. But for all other activities, such as making curds, cooking, churning the curds etc., she was always using earthen vessels, for each dish a suitable separate one. She could make use of naturally available things such as the kern of banana tree which fall due to wind, its flowers, unripe ones, young nuts of udumbara tree, hibiscus flowers etc. and prepare not only taste but nutritious items. Hardly did she waste anything.

Alur Venkat Rao was a champion of unification of Karnataka; he worked hard for the movement, and hence rightly called Karnataka Kula Purohita. In 1957 Venkat Rao visited Daivarata's Ashram, with whom he had an intimate association. He stayed almost a week and observed Daivarata's handling of agriculture, animal husbandry and other activities. He loved to hear Veda mantras from the daughters of Daivarata, and how they were involved in agriculture. The girls made many rare dishes, including sweets from green banana. And he felt, that he had vision of how the environment could have been thousands of years ago during the time of Rishis.

It was about three years since Daivarãta couple came to Ashokavana. At that time, once the Nature at the sea shore became suddenly furious and roaring waves high waves lashed the sea-shore. They painfully witnessed, the lashing waves and wind completely dilapidating the Ashram, and the gardens of coconut, mango, Punnaga, neem and others, even as they were watching mutely. Such a beautiful scene was obliterated like a dream.

Good or bad whatever it be,

Nothing does eternally here stay.

The rotating wheel of time, tramples all.

Nothing remains, all melt away.

Daivarãta was shocked at it; but to strive with the current of time was inevitable. Life is but a string of wonders, and it remains never as it is. Thereafter, he, wandering continuously spent his life in disseminating the knowledge of the Arsha principles and teaching their message.

The area of Ashokavana was vast. There was a little paddy field as well as coconut garden. But it was not sufficient for running their life. With great

difficulty they were pulling on. Shraddha Devi herself together with her daughters used to plant paddy saplings and grow. In a small area they were growing sugarcane also. Daivarata was coming to Ashram once in a year or two years. Hearing his return the Halakki and Mukri workers would came and Daivarata would get some works done by them in the field and garden. At that time, Shraddha Devi had to prepare food for all of them. Naturally the work load was taxing her heavily. When the money he brought was spent up, again he would go, travelling about, all over the country. So Shraddha Devi, with six children had to sustain all the difficulties, under the shadow of poverty, she had to face every day with difficulty only.

This pertains to the days of British rule. While Daivarata was travelling, for rejuvenation and propagation of Vedic principles, and to give lectures, once in a conference stage he came in contact with Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Dr. Rajendra Prasad who was one of the leaders of independence movement was attracted by Daivarata. Later their intimacy developed and intensified as the days passed. Once in Mumbai Dr. Rajendra Prasad introduced Daivarãta to Mahatma Gandhi. When Gandhiji came to know that Daivarata was a disciple of Shri Ramana Maharshi, Gandhiji requested him to pray to Ramana, to bless the freedom movement which they were fighting. At that time Jamunalal Bajaj was also with them. In a few days, Daivaräta and Rajendra Prasad together went to Shri Ramaa Maharshi and obtained his blessings. After independence, Rajendra Prasad became the first president of the country. Daivarata enjoyed free entry in Ratrapati Bhavan.

81. Dr. Rajendra Prasad visits Daivarata’s Ashram

Accepting Daivarata’s hearty invitation, Dr. Rajendra Prasad came to see his ‘Arsha (Vedic) type Ashram’, on 9-11-1959. Though most part of the Ashram was carried away by the waves of the see, the vast hall of Patha-shala in which the Veda was taught to the students was still remaining. Rajendra Prasad received his hospitality in the Ashram. Daivarata presented the book ‘Umasahasram’ composed by his Guru Kavyakantha Vasistha Ganapati Muni. At that time Medha Devi, the daughter of Daivarata chanted the Vedas and gave a talk on it. Rajendra Prasad was very pleased. At about 1 o’clock, Dr. Rajendra Prasad took lunch with

Daivarata. Shraddha Devi herself had cooked the food for them. Though he was the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad was an unassuming person, and he spent time happily and freely at Daivarata's Ashram, which was free from any pomp or show. On that occasion Dr. Rajendra Prasad expressed his opinion in writing (in Hindi), it is as follows.

'I was looking for visiting this Ashram since a long time, which materialised today by the grace of Shri Mahabaleshwar. Besides having the Darshan of Shri Mahabaleshwar, I got the opportunity of meeting many Vedic Scholars. I was very happy to be in the Ashram. I knew the great erudition and knowledge of Daivarata from a long time, and today I was able to visit his Ashram. I wish his knowledge be put in writing (in print) so that it may be available to interested people, easily.'

Rajendra Prasad

Date: 09-11-1959 ***

The maternal grandfather of Daivarata had studied the Veda in Kashi. He conducted Sanskrit Patha-shälã in his house. Later, Daivarata named it as 'Medha Dakshinamurti Vidya Peetha' and worked for its development. When Dr.Rajendra Prasad visited Gokarna, at the request of Daivarata, laid the foundation stone of new building.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, while travelling in Maharashtra, visiting Nãsik and surrounding area, took Daivarata with him. They visited Tryambakeshwar and the cave temples.

In Vishwa Samskrta Sammelana held at Jagannath Puri Daivarata has eulogised Daivarata in Samskrt. The gist is as follows

"………. संप्रति प्रस्तुतेस्मिन् कलिकाले संस्कृत भारती तत्त्वस्य प्रकाशनेन विश्वकल्याणार्थं प्रस्तुतोऽयं 'संस्कृत विश्वपरिषदत् समारंभः' स्वकीयं इदं परमं ध्येयं अचिरादेव साधयितुं प्रभवतु निखिल जगदध्यक्षस्य परमैश्वर्यस्य परिपूर्णस्य श्री भगव्तो राजेन्द्रस्य प्रसादादिति सर्वच्छन्दसां वर्षकं छन्दोमुखेन समभ्यर्थये 'स घा राजेन्द्र आदभन्नः इति ।तथैव पुनः श्री भारताध्यक्षस्य संस्कृत विश्वपरिषदध्यक्षस्य 'श्री राजेन्द्र प्रसादस्य' समाश्रयेण संयोजनेन च संस्कृत विद्याभ्युदय ध्येयं सिध्यतु …."

Dr. Radhakrishnan, the second President of India had great love for the Vedic principles and spirituality, he himself, a noted philosopher and a scholar of Samskrt has written books on the Bhagavadgita, Upanishad and Brahmasutra. He had great reverence and devotion for Vasistha Ganapati Muni and had an intimate relation with him. He had invited Ganapati Muni to deliver a lecture in Samskrt when he was the vice-chancellor of the University of Vishakhapatnam. At that time Radhakrishnan praised Ganapati Muni's genius and said - "There no one else among us today who has such deep knowledge of Vedic principles as Shri Vasishtha Ganapati Muni."

Even before this, Radhakrishnan knew that Daivarata was the disciple of Ganapati Muni. When Dr. Rajendra Prasad was the president and Daivaräta was the guest at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Radhakrishna had invited Daivarata to his residence. During their meeting Daivarata had explained to him in Tamil, the huge sketches and pictures such as 'Vishwa Rathna', 'Vishwa Chakra' etc. and also explained how Hindu, Rekha, Kona, Varna and Mudra - symbols are presented in the Vedic literature.

Thereafter, from 1952 to 1961 Radhakrishnan was the Vice President. He had arranged a gathering the 'Holi' day of 1962. In that gathering Daivarãta explained the verse of the Upanishad.

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्षमुच्यते ।
अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत् तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ (Mu. 2.2.4)
'Pranava (om) is the bow, the soul is the arrow, the goal is to go and merge in Brahman.'

'One should get absorbed in Pranavopasana. In that flow of Nada, the inner mind becomes one with the Cosmic Spirit; this is the purport of the Upanishadic statement.

Daivarata gave an elaborate talk on this statement. Rädhãkrishnan explained it in English to the scholars and members assembled. In the same year (1962) due to the efforts of Radhnakrishnan, 'Akhila Bhãrata Vaidic Sammelana' was held. The Sammelana was inaugurated by Daivarata and was conducted as per his directions.

82. Meeting of Pandit Madanamohan Malaviya

While returning to Gokarna from Nepal, Daivarata stayed with RajaRishi Mahãraj Jadda Samir a saint. At that time Saint Samir introduced Daivarãta to Pandit Madanamohana Malaviya. Malaviyaji had great regard, respect and pious pride in regard to our motherland, its languages and traditions. While he was having a dialogue with Daivarãta about Bharatiya culture, Samskrt language, Yoga, Veda and the Upanisads, he felt as if he was conversing with Rishi of the Vedic times. Fascinated by Daivarãta, Shri Malaviyaji had discussions with him for a week and got clarifications to many of his doubts. The acquaintance thus started, later led to have a close link with the Banares Hindu University. On the loving request of Malaviyaji, Daivarata stayed in Banares University for two months and wrote his book 'Nada-Rupa'. Nadopasana is the Sama-gana, further developed into 'Pranavaradhana' in the Rishi-tradition. 'Nada-Rupa' is an elaborate explanation of it. Further, in the coming days, two more important works, viz., 'Vedartha Kalpa Latika' and 'Mula Yajurveda Samhita' were published.

Daivarata's immense Vedic knowledge came to be well known all over the country whenever there is any programme, or a conference pertaining to the Veda, Daivarata was invariably invited. 'Veda Sandesha', the address delivered by Daivarata created a new awareness in the scholars assembled there, and opened up their mind to new way of thinking. Daivarata participated in the programme arranged at Banaras Hindu University in November, 1963. He threw light on various important points hidden in the Vedas. At that time, Dr. Vasudeva Sharan Agarwal, who was the professor of Indian Philosophy in the same University and Director of research oriented study on the Vedas, exclaimed — "A scholar with the brilliance of the vedic times is amongst now. It is our great fortune!" In January 1964, Veda Sammelana took place in Tirupati. Daivarata participated in it. He talked about the corpus of vedic literature and gave a comprehensive view of the vedas. In the same year Veda Sammelana held in Delhi. Daivarata was honoured to preside over it. Shri T.T. Krishnamachari who was then the finance minister at the central government organised it. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri was chairman of the inauguration function.

Vidya Vachaspati Award: In the Veda Parishad held in Delhi in 1964, Shri Lãl Bahädur Shãstri conferred on Daivarata and honoured him with the certificate.

83. Drawing skills of Daivarãta

Daivarata, to his credit, has drawn many huge oil paintings. Among them are ‘Vishwa Chakra’, ‘Vishwa Ratha’, ‘Ardhanarishwara’ etc. They are intended to explain the subjects pertaining to the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the Universe, as mentioned in the Vedic principles, involving five symbols viz., Bindu, Rekhã, Kona, Varna and Mudrä. Daivaräta was not only a Rishi, but also a Yogi, Poet, Artist, Author, Agriculturist, Physician and skilful in culinary art. He was indeed a versatile genius.

84. Multilingual erudition of Daivarata

Besides Samskrt (and naturally his mother tongue Kannada), Daivarãta was able to speak Hindi, Marati, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Napeli, Bengali, Konkani and Parsi also. Speaking about the similarities between words in ‘Avesta’ the sacred book of Parsi, and the Vedic literature, he showed how the mantras in Avesta also can be chanted set to ‘Swarãs’ just as the Veda-mantras. Just as he has authored many books in Sanskrit, he has composed many devotional songs in Kannada also. ‘Pashupati Hrdayam’ is his work in Nepali and Hindi. That is published in Nepal. Even when he was young he used compose Bhajans extempore, sing and dance, in the company of Guru Rämadãsa Swami.

85. Sudden Accident

Daivarãta was, even in his old age very active and agile. There was a religious programme arranged by Dandeli Paper Mills at Bhangoor Nagar in August 1973. Daivarãta was invited. When he thought of attending the programme Shraddhã Devi did not agree. The reason was that he did not have enough physical strength as before to move about. Then again, with the agreement of her, he went Bhangoor Nagar together with younger son Devashrava, by the vehicle arranged by the Paper Mills. After two days programme at Bhangoor Nagar, he went to Dharwad and stayed with Justice G.N. Sabhãhit, on his request. He stayed with him for four days. While he was

returning, his car met with an accident near Unakal. As soon as it was known, justice Sabhähit and others, admitted him to Hubli K.M.C. Hospital. Daivarãta had fracture of right elbow and ribs. Ranganath Diwäkar, who was very close to Daivarãta used to come to the hospital every day to enquire about his well-being. Another close friend, Dr. R.B. Patil, realised the seriousness and shifted him from K.M.C. Hospital to his own nursing home, on his personal responsibility. He conducted the surgical operation once again and treated him. After the treatment over a month, Daivarāta was brought to Gokarna, Ashokavana. In the natural and calm atmosphere of Ashokavana his health improved and came to normal.

After recovering from the accident in July 1975, Daivarāta, with son Devashrava, he travelled towards northern India. From Goa, he went to Delhi by air. Then he visited Rishikesh, Gopeshvara, Badri and Kedar, and returned to Gokarna after a month.

86.Journey towards Infinity

It was 13th August 1975, the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Shrãvana. Daivarãta had developed pain in the chest. His physical condition was not normal. So he took only liquid food. All the members of the family had assembled. It was 2 a.m. He walked four steps with the support of Devashrava and as he was sitting on the bed, his breathing stopped. He journeyed to Infinity.

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RISHI-LIFE - THE LIFE SUBLIME

That a Rishi was born once again and evolved to become a 'Seer' of the Veda -Mantras, even about three thousand years after the end of the Vedic Era testifies to the fact that the Revelation of the Veda-Mantras is possible even in the present times. Adjusting and adapting oneself in tune with Nature's laws, without causing pains to anyone else, to live a life of Enlightenment, amidst the pains and pleasures, trials and tribulations, hopes and despair of natural aspirations, with a deep implicit compassion and feeling of ahimsa towards all is itself the way of Rishi-Life. Arsheya Rishi- Life does not make it imperative to curb all the natural longings and instincts which would amount to hankering after them internally and live with self deception. On the contrary, Rishi-life aims at attaining the Light of Knowledge even while one is living a pious and sacred householder's life as a Karmayogi. The life of Brahmarshi Daivarata exemplifies such an ideal life.

The favourite Deity of young Daivarata Himself came in the form of Vasishtha Ganapati Muni and compassionately accepted and blessed him with discipleship at his feet. A soul throbbing with burning spiritual aspiration, wandering without a definite path to embark upon, succeeded in attaining the refined and sublime imprints of a Rishi- personality. Ganesha was transformed into Daivarata. Under the shade of divine love and grace of his Guru Ganapati Muni, in the deep Samadhi state during his tapas, he evolved into a Seer of Veda- Mantras - A Mantra Drashta.

SAKSHI

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